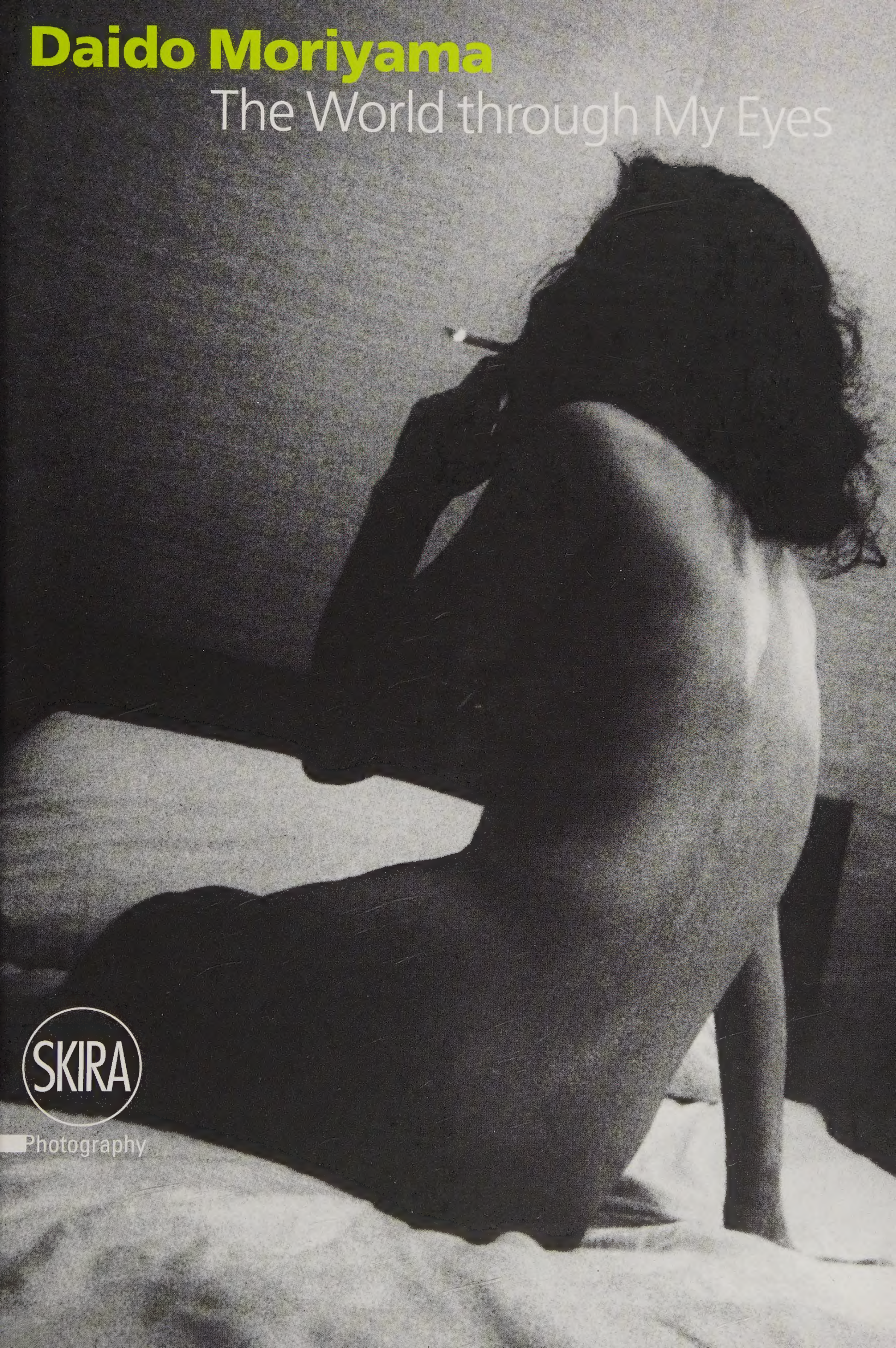
Daido Moriyama
The World through My Eyes



SKIRA

Photography

Daido Moriyama

Daido Moriyama

The World through My Eyes

edited by
Filippo Maggia

SKIRA

Art Director
Marcello Francone

Design
Luigi Fiore

Editorial Coordination
Francesca Lazzarini
Eva Vanzella

Editing
Emanuela Di Lallo

Layout
Laura Rozzoni

Translation
Alfred Birnbaum
Antoniomarco Gennaro
Susan Ann White for *Scriptum*, Rome

First published in Italy in 2010 by
Skira Editore S.p.A.
Palazzo Casati Stampa
via Torino 61
20123 Milano
Italy
www.skira.net

Printed and bound in Italy.
First edition

ISBN: 978-88-572-0061-3

Distributed in North America by Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., 300 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10010, USA.
Distributed elsewhere in the world by Thames and Hudson Ltd., 181A High Holborn, London WC1V 7QX, United Kingdom.

Texts by
Akira Hasegawa
Francesca Lazzarini
Filippo Maggia

Special thanks to the artist and Hisako Motoo for her precious collaboration

Thanks to
Fondazione Cassa
di Risparmio di Modena
Fondazione Fotografia

Contents

Interview with Daido Moriyama

Filippo Maggia

fm Your real name is Hiromichi Moriyama. Where does Daido come from?
dm My name is composed of two ideograms: hiro + michi. Hiro means "wide" and michi means "street", literally "wide street". But these two characters can also be read as *dai* and *do*, which gives us Daido. This is the most natural and direct reading, and when people saw my name written they would pronounce it Daido, even though I explained every time: no, you're wrong, it reads "Hiromichi". Then after a while I gave up, and became Daido.

fm So, it's as if your destiny was already in your name, seeing that the theme of travelling is central to your work and you have already come a long, long way.
dm Yes, there must be some connection, though to be honest I prefer narrow streets to wide ones. In any case, the streets are the setting for thousands of my photographs and, in some cases, the actual subject. So my having that name is very strange: it's exactly the right one for me.

fm You were born in 1938 and your childhood coincided with the Second World War, right up to its terrible conclusion. Do you have memories of that period?
dm I remember many things about the war, different events and situations. I was seven years old and in my first year at elementary school when the war ended in 1945. At that age I was not at all frightened and the devastation of war did not seem real to me. I have memories, but horror is not one of them.

fm You knew and worked with two great Japanese masters: Shomei Tomatsu and Eikoh Hosoe, becoming the latter's assistant. With whom do you have more in common?
dm Shomei Tomatsu, definitely.

fm In fact, Tomatsu – whom I met a few years ago in Okinawa – considers you his heir.
dm I remember how excited I was by Shomei Tomatsu's photos when I saw them. His work was really crucial to my artistic formation, a true point of reference. Eikoh Hosoe was my master from a technical standpoint, he was the one who taught me how to photograph. However, his research is expressed in very dramatic visions with surrealist overtones, while Shomei Tomatsu's is more like mine: an endless exploration of the world, an inexhaustible desire to recount the city, the streets and the people who inhabit them.

fm You read *On the Road* by Jack Kerouac in the prime of youth, and he became an important travelling companion for many years. I'm intrigued by your interest in an American writer, since I don't know how well-known or appreciated he would have been in Japan during the US occupation. But I'm even more intrigued by the fact that a young Japanese was so struck by Kerouac that he adopted his book as a kind of Bible and literally went "on the road".
dm During that period I read a lot and was struck by many things, I was very receptive and open-minded. Jack Kerouac had a gift for creating photographic images of his travels, with his typewriter. This ability of his influenced and conditioned the path I later took.

fm Are you familiar with Paul Bowles?
dm I know his name, but not his work.

fm Paul Bowles was a writer and artist who belonged to the Beat Generation. Maybe you saw the film based on his most famous book, *The Sheltering Sky*, for which a Japanese musician, Ryuichi Sakamoto, composed the score. Paul Bowles was also a photographer, like the Beat poet Allen Ginsberg.
dm First, let me tell you about Jack Kerouac. What struck me so deeply about *On the Road* was the theme of freedom and wandering: travelling for the pleasure of it, with no specific destination in mind. For me travel means being on the move, rather than reaching a particular place.

fm All this is clearly reflected in your images. And what do you think of Allen Ginsberg's photos?
dm I'm familiar with Allen Ginsberg, but I've never seen his photographs.

fm Many Beat guys took photos, but no one was really able to recount with images what they so powerfully could with the written word. The shots tell us about the Beat generation and those years, but they're like notes in the margin.
dm I was not so much attracted by the meaning of their books, but by the fact that their words were able to create images that appeared in front of my eyes. That's what made the biggest impression on me.

fm In the literature by these authors the protagonist is nearly always a loner who wanders aimlessly and who, through his endless roaming, contributes to the creation of invented worlds. A chain of experiences, one after the other, generates images, projections of reality. In the end, these images and reality are the same thing. This process seems very similar to your method of working.
dm Yes, I can really identify with that way of feeling. I'm primarily interested in re-

counting the streets and the people who animate them and bring them alive, in narrating reality. But the story is mine: it is not a news camera that is recording what is happening out there, but Daido telling you about the road he is following.

fm How important is experience to you?
dm Experience is certainly fundamental for me. The most crucial thing about it is that it presents itself in a new and different way every time. In fact, every day is always a new experience and photography enables me to describe what I am living at a particular moment. In this regard, photography is perfect, it corresponds fully to the conceptual approach. Experience is never-ending, inexhaustible.

fm To what degree does experience coincide with knowledge?
dm They go hand in hand for me: every experience lived is knowledge acquired, therefore knowledge, too, is potentially unlimited.

fm Tell me about *Provoke*, the magazine founded in 1968 with decidedly innovative aims, which – despite the fact that only three issues came out – marked a crucial moment in Japanese photography, and for you in particular.
dm *Provoke* was based on two fundamental concepts: expression through images and not words, and the rejection of traditional artistic approaches.

fm … so steering clear of the traditional documentary style and representing reality as it is with mordant, penetrating and provoking images…
dm *Provoke* rejected the established meaning of words as well as art. The basic concept adhered to by all those who participated in the production of the magazine was "the world is not the way we think we see it a priori". We are accustomed to understanding and representing everything by reducing it to its mere meaning, but it is not like that: the world and reality are not only what they seem to be at first. I was still a young man at the time, but still, this notion is living on in the photographs I take today.

fm Hence the need always to go beyond appearances, to root out what is hidden beneath the surface. Like a hunter flushing out his prey.
dm Once I took a photo entitled just that: *The Hunter*. The idea is to go beyond the reality before your eyes, what is all around us, what we have in front of us. I find this very stimulating and, quite simply, for me taking a photograph is none other than an instinctive reaction to that stimulus.

fm … "delving" into reality…
dm Not exactly, I'm not "looking for" anything. It's actually a question of "drawing

out" something. This drawing out obviously requires research, knowledge and an understanding of what you have in front of you. At the same time, my self-knowledge evolves. This is usually what happens.

fm You select fragments of reality through photography.
dm Let me try to explain: the external surface that appears before my eyes constitutes a stimulus that unleashes an impulse, a reaction. I walk through the city streets with my camera, constantly bombarded by these stimuli. With my camera I am able to produce a reaction to these manifold solicitations, to respond to them. It is a constant repartee between reality and Daido. This is the relationship that is created. This is the way I see, know and participate in the societal life all around me. The process is repeated constantly, and it's my way of photographing. It is not that I have particular subjects, abstract or well-defined forms in mind – they abound in the city and society… I think that my way of photographing consists in capturing some of the subjects in this multitude.

fm Talking about the subjects of your photos, in the early 1970s you produced the series entitled *Shashin yo Sayonara (Farewell Photography)*, a group of works in which the subjects are almost indistinguishable, the images chaotic, grainy and blurred. How important was this extremely radical experience in your artistic career?
dm I wanted to overturn my approach to photography from a conceptual standpoint during that period. I felt this irrepressible urge, this need to destroy, to cancel everything. I thought "now everything will change, I, too, am no longer who I was before". That's why, in a certain sense, my photography of that period was by far the most conceptual.

fm Is there anything that Daido hasn't been able to photograph?
dm Rather than "not being able", there are things I've never wanted to photograph. I'm completely unable to photograph something I don't want to depict. Descriptive or didactic images, for example. I've never done them and I would never want to. I want to photograph things that I, too, don't fully comprehend, the things I can't explain – I can quite happily skip what I understand. Still, I have no intention of explaining anything with my photos. Those who look at them are free to interpret them how they like.

fm … to all of us reality seems like an unsolvable mystery that photography can penetrate.
dm What do you mean by mystery? Practically all of the reality projected before my eyes is a mystery, that's why I explore it. This enigma has various facets: eroticism, suffering, amusement… There are many elements which, as a whole, undoubtedly con-

stitute a never-ending puzzle. The raison d'être of photography lies here, in its capacity to represent this conundrum, but without the obligation or the responsibility of arriving at a solution, of unravelling the mystery. It is not possible to understand through one or even a hundred photographs. It's like a riddle. More than a mystery, it seems to me like a maze. Walking through the city is like walking through a maze for me. I don't want to provide answers, I prefer to leave the question unsolved, to leave the query about what is before us hanging there, even after looking at the images.

fm Do you mean that we see a possible reality, but many different ones exist…
dm By photographing a single reality, countless others can be seen. Different realities coexist within a single image. That's the magic of photography.

Tokyo Shinjuku, 13 May 2010

Dealing with a Stray Dog

Akira Hasegawa

It might seem odd to begin consideration of Daido Moriyama's photography by talking about a dog, though by now this story already figures as an "incident" in the history of Japanese photography. So, let's start from there.

The photograph first appeared as a single image within the series *Nanika he no Tabi (En Route to Something)* in the March 1971 issue of *Asahi Camera*. As Moriyama himself recalls, "right after New Year 1971, I took a picture of a stray dog in Misawa up north in Aomori where there was a US military base. I was heading out in the morning with my camera in hand and took one step out of the hotel, when right there in front of me was this stray dog wandering around sunning himself. Just like that I pointed my lens at the stray dog and clicked the shutter a few times; later on, his moment in the light was printed as a full spread for a photo magazine series I was doing at the time". As simple as that. Yet, now that same photograph "catches the eye of photography fans and somehow remains a favourite in Japan and around the world. It's become a print that wanders around between museums and galleries and private collectors" (from an *Asahi Shimbun* newspaper essay by Moriyama). A turn of events the young photographer could never have imagined.

Daido Moriyama was perhaps the first Japanese photographer to have been called scandalous. There had been scandals involving photographic subjects before, but never extremely negative reactions nor staunch support towards photographic technique per se.

We can readily understand this situation comparing it with the advent of the Impressionists. As is well known, critics dismissed Monet's *Impression, soleil levant* as little more than a rough sketch by the norms that prevailed in painting when it was first exhibited in April 1874. Similarly, at a time when Japanese photography was divided between Nika Art Annual exhibitors, the so-called "salon photographers", and popular magazine "news photographers", Moriyama was dubbed the "leader of the jerky-blurrists" (*buréboké-ha no kishu*), a virtually extinct epithet for a small group of photographers (largely under the influence of Moriyama) who eschewed ordinary aims for image clarity and intentionally used shaky, blurry, grainy qualities and ultra-high contrast to gain expressive effects.

The mention of the Impressionists was not, however, solely in reference to the stir their appearance caused; there were also stylistic commonalities to their gaze. While Monet's vision was often described as one of "flux" (*du mouvement*), Moriyama's view

of photography as essentially an instantaneous medium meant that the photographer's thoughts and spirit, and not just his technique, must also partake "of the moment" – or else, perhaps, build up "one-time-only" memories. As Moriyama himself puts it in *Tono monogatari (Tales of Tono)*, "my hometown is a primal scene pieced together out of distant memory fragments. A jigsaw puzzle. There've been times when photography was more memory than documentation for me ... so my thing about afterimages, that I can't tell if I saw long ago or not, is my own orientation towards that primal view and at the same time something right here and now". This admission that, for him, taking photographs is tantamount to tracking memory afterimages or verifying déjà-vus might be slightly oversimplified; yet we do sense a certain unmistakable tone here underscoring all of Moriyama's photographs.

To think that such a lonesome mental imagist was then regarded as a destructive or revolutionary force in photography would be incomprehensible at this late date without knowing something of the late 1960s. Some talk of the politicized climate, but more than any ultimately futile political efforts, the real results or change came by way of reforming consciousness and diversifying lifestyles. Hereon it is instructive to compare his images with the historically closer Nouvelle Vague, a term first applied to film in 1958. This was a society-wide backlash against the "old guard" that grew out of French youth's disillusionment with their parents' wartime failures and the subsequent influence of post-war American culture. While their raw visuals and eschewing of staid scripts truly paralleled "jerky-blurrist" tastes in Japanese photography, even more remarkable was their kindred spirit. As film critic Susumu Hosokawa sums up so aptly in his *Nouvelle Vague'tte Nani? (What's This Nouvelle Vague?)*, "such scenes often figured in sketchy stories lacking in cohesive narrative line. Ephemeral, alienated, anti-mainstream scenes that obstructed viewers' identification with any symbolic cinematic order or character" – a description that might also somewhat apply to Moriyama. Nonetheless, that was just the beginning, a chance coincidence with the spirit of the times. For whereas the Nouvelle Vague had its day and disappeared, Moriyama's visuals continued to develop in their own unique way.

Enough explanation. Now at last we come to the main subject.

I wrote my first tentative "Moriyama discourse" for *Camera Mainichi* in 1983, at a time when Moriyama had yet to be recognized as an avant-garde hero or garner worldwide acclaim. The mood of the 1960s and 1970s still lingered on, but I felt a little out of place. Maybe it was something akin to Moriyama's "homeless" fixation upon memories, which he ascribed to having moved around repeatedly due to his father's job, a feeling reinforced when I read what he wrote about the wandering life in his collection of essays *Inu no Kioku (Memories of a Dog)*. Comparing the poets Matsuo Basho and Yosa Buson, Moriyama considered Basho a "professional wanderer" whose "dreams went journeying over barren fields" even on his deathbed, whereas Buson was merely a vicarious "inner tripper", a homebody infatuated with the idea of

wandering and "no master of the rigours of the road". Surely Moriyama was speaking of his own travels through these Edo period poets. Indeed, he's forever on the road – to where is not the question, for to judge from his photographs, he's roaming his own internal landscape. So I concluded my critique: "thus Moriyama is revealed to be, not the fighting visual artist who rocked the world of photography in the tumultuous 1960s, but very much in the mould of a lone wanderer like Toshiyuki Hasegawa and Santoka Taneda channelling the deeper undercurrents of traditional Japanese culture".

By now, my supposition has proven correct. Moriyama must have brought up the haiku poets because he quickly caught on to the similarities between haiku and photography. The difference between travel and haiku and travel and photography merely lies in whether one clips the mental image inspired by the view and saves it in words or in photographs. Which is why Moriyama's own words resonate so intimately with the poetic dictum *ichigo ichie*, "one instance, one encounter" supposedly first uttered by tea master Sen no Rikyu's disciple Yamanoue Soji in *Yamanoue Sojiki* (*Records of Yamanoue Soji)*: "we may call all tea ceremony gatherings one-time encounters, for even should the same host and guests convene again and again, the unrepeatable nature of today's gathering makes it a truly once-in-a-lifetime experience". Of course, this awareness is rooted in the Buddhist doctrine of *mujo*, or "impermanence".

Both Basho and Moriyama travelled constantly. Basho's disciple Morikawa Kyoriku relates the following words of his master: "Wandering is the blossom of taste (*fuga*), taste is soul of the transient; what [the poets] Saigyo and Sogi left unseen is the heart of haiku" (from *Infutagi – Hidden Verses*). Not only is Basho stating his own perception of how essential travel is for the haiku poet, but he cites two great predecessors, the literary vagabonds Saigyo and Sogi, declaring anything they missed to be the very essence of haiku; meaning, I believe, their classicist poetics made them focus too much on sites of literary renown.

Likewise, Moriyama is a photographer who visualizes what others missed, or rather, didn't even try to see. Many photographers are travellers, though most of them head out with particular destinations or purposes in mind; they don't travel just to travel. Whereas Moriyama wanders off with his camera, less of a contemporary cameraman than the image of an ancient haiku poet.

Today, more and more people appreciate Moriyama's photography and even follow his lifestyle. A number of photographers emulate him; one might even say he has his share of disciples. Yet, how many of them truly comprehend his solitary roaming? Basho also had his "ten disciples" (*shomon iittetsu*), but as he wrote in what effectively was his farewell poem ("This path/ where no one walks/ the last of autumn") he never renounced the realization that he walked his path alone.

These days, Moriyama is showered with accolades the likes of which he could have scarcely imagined. Or to put it sarcastically, if the Impressionists' triumph was to wrest painting away from the church and hang it in the bourgeois living room, then

Moriyama's oneupmanship was getting foreign collectors to fight over a ridiculed photo of a stray dog. But what does Moriyama himself make of it? More than likely he remains puzzled as to what all these people could possibly see in his images. Recently, during his retrospective at the Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography, seeing people from all over the world queued for two hours to shake Moriyama's hand, I couldn't help but feel the man is still a solitary loner.

The World through My Eyes










バー
花の友


花の


服店
ひぐれ

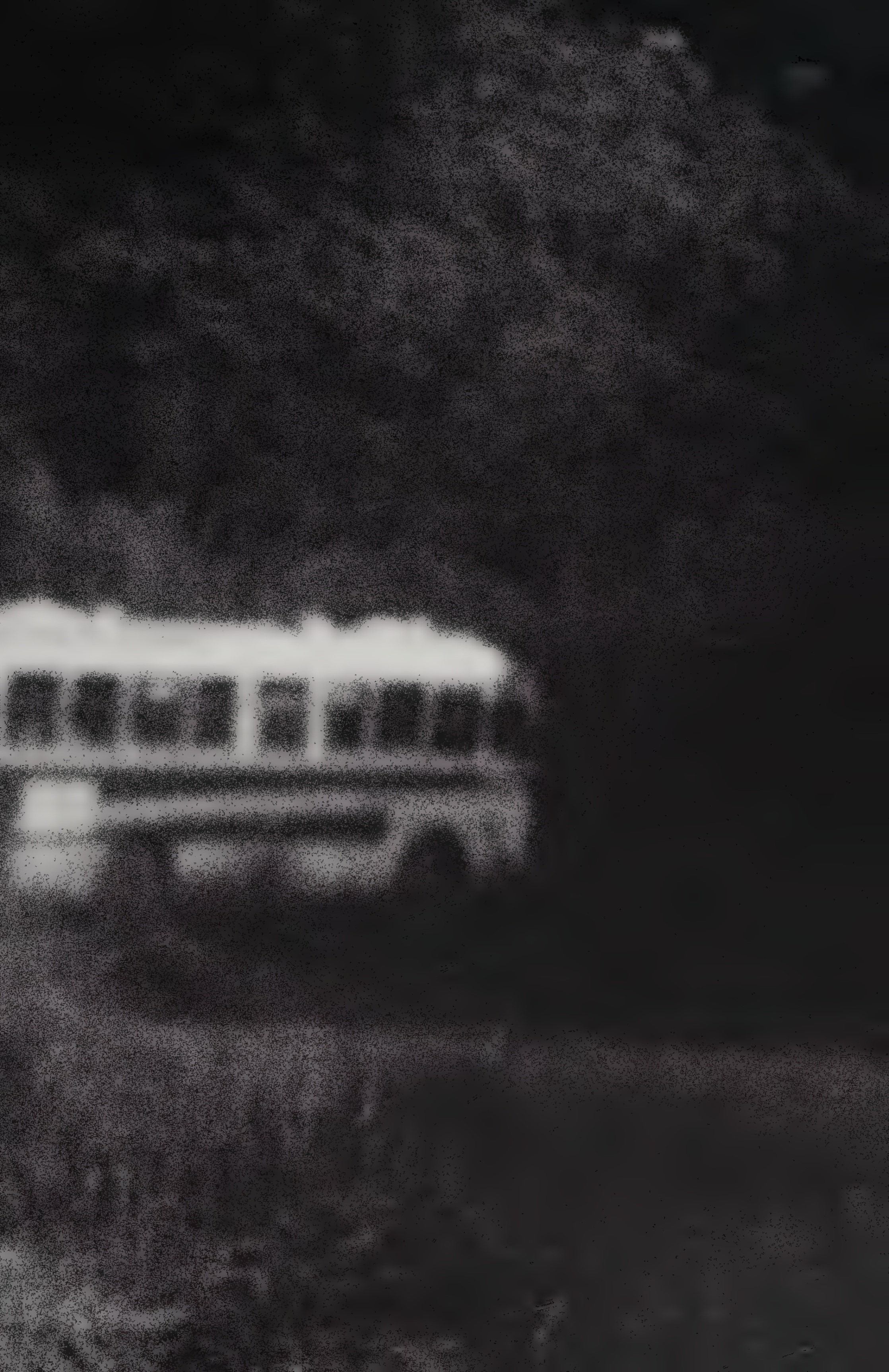

買入



四季のおばんざい
AJI KURA
欧風料理
重亭
洋食
重亭


株式会社












Coca-Cola










週刊現代




















OSHIMAKI-OSEN
月笛お仙
遠征隊!! 新宿花園神社にのろしを上げる!!
月笛お仙
義理人情いろはにほへと編


風月
レストラン
喫


GR


HITACHI


唄と踊りと






締めて
提供■エクセス
たかった事
止めて下さい!
成人映画











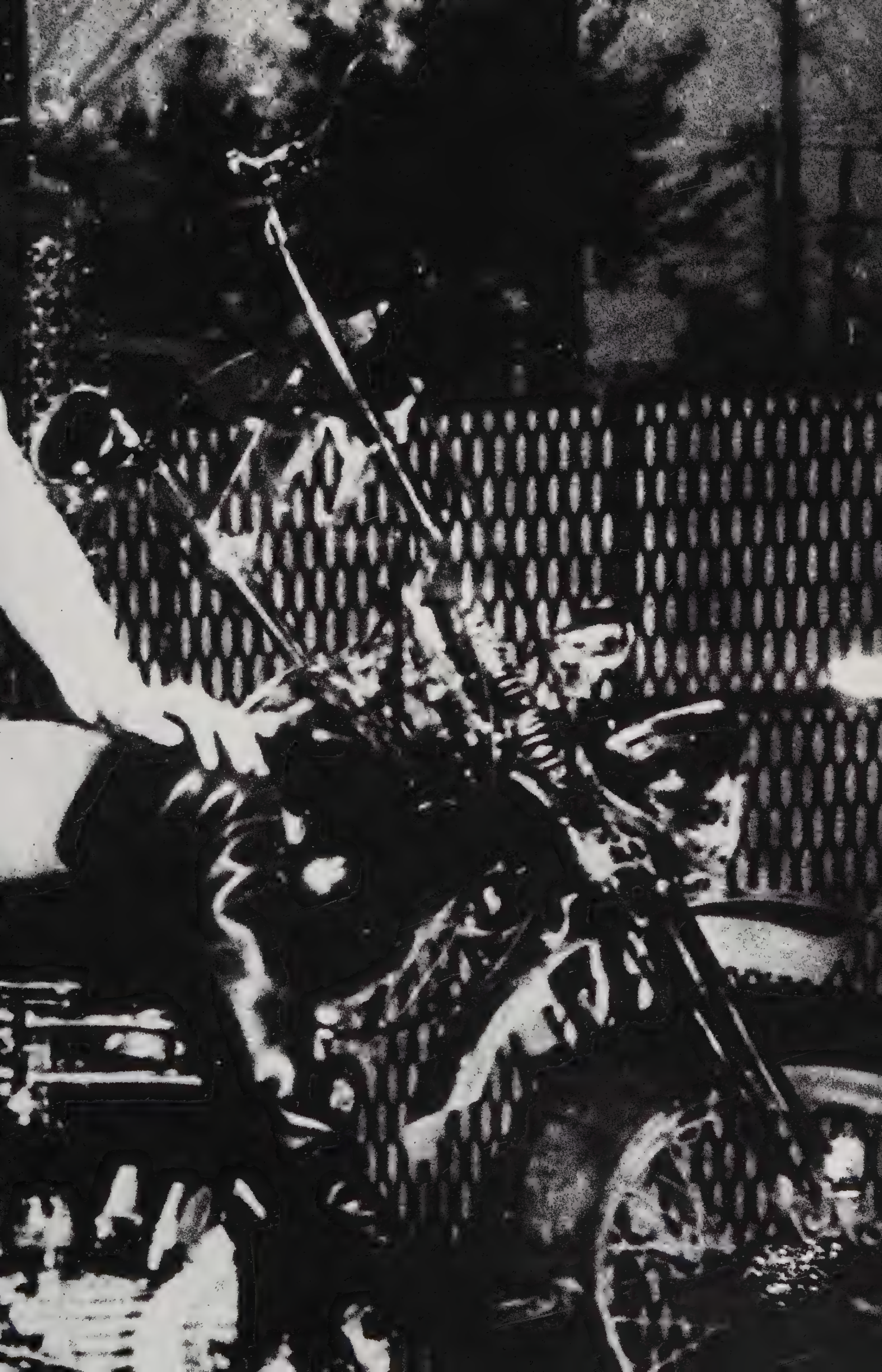



プレー
ルーム
JAMES CHEN
TAILORING CO.
PORTRAIT




VANHOOL
HATO BUS







祝
松川信一
中村
松川
森川
春日


質
オザワ
1436
東京公演
中村雄次郎


お湯シャワー完備
更衣所
お湯シャワー完
平井





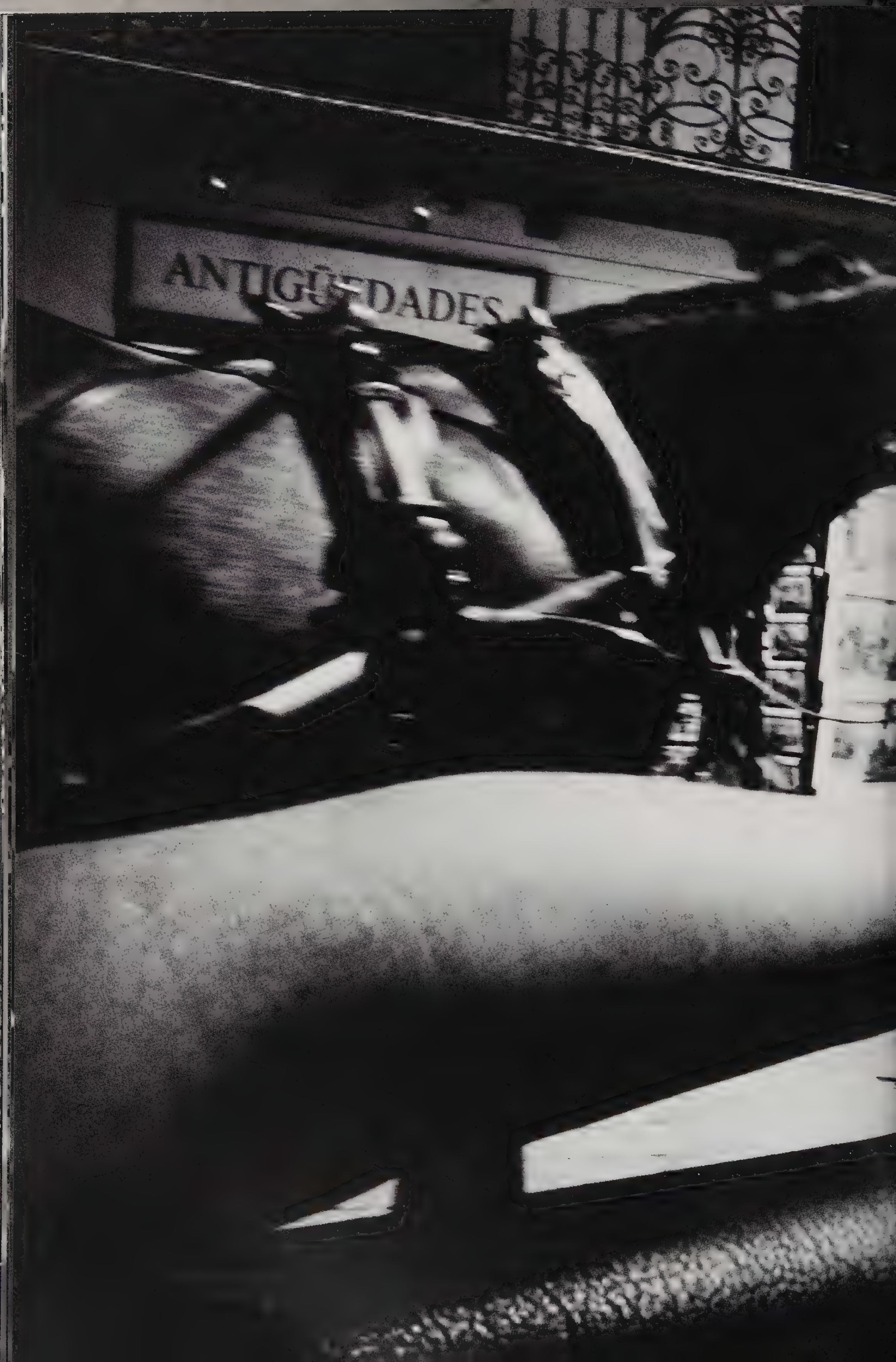



カフエー


松











Victoria
sports
SKI
TAXI
1454


15-98



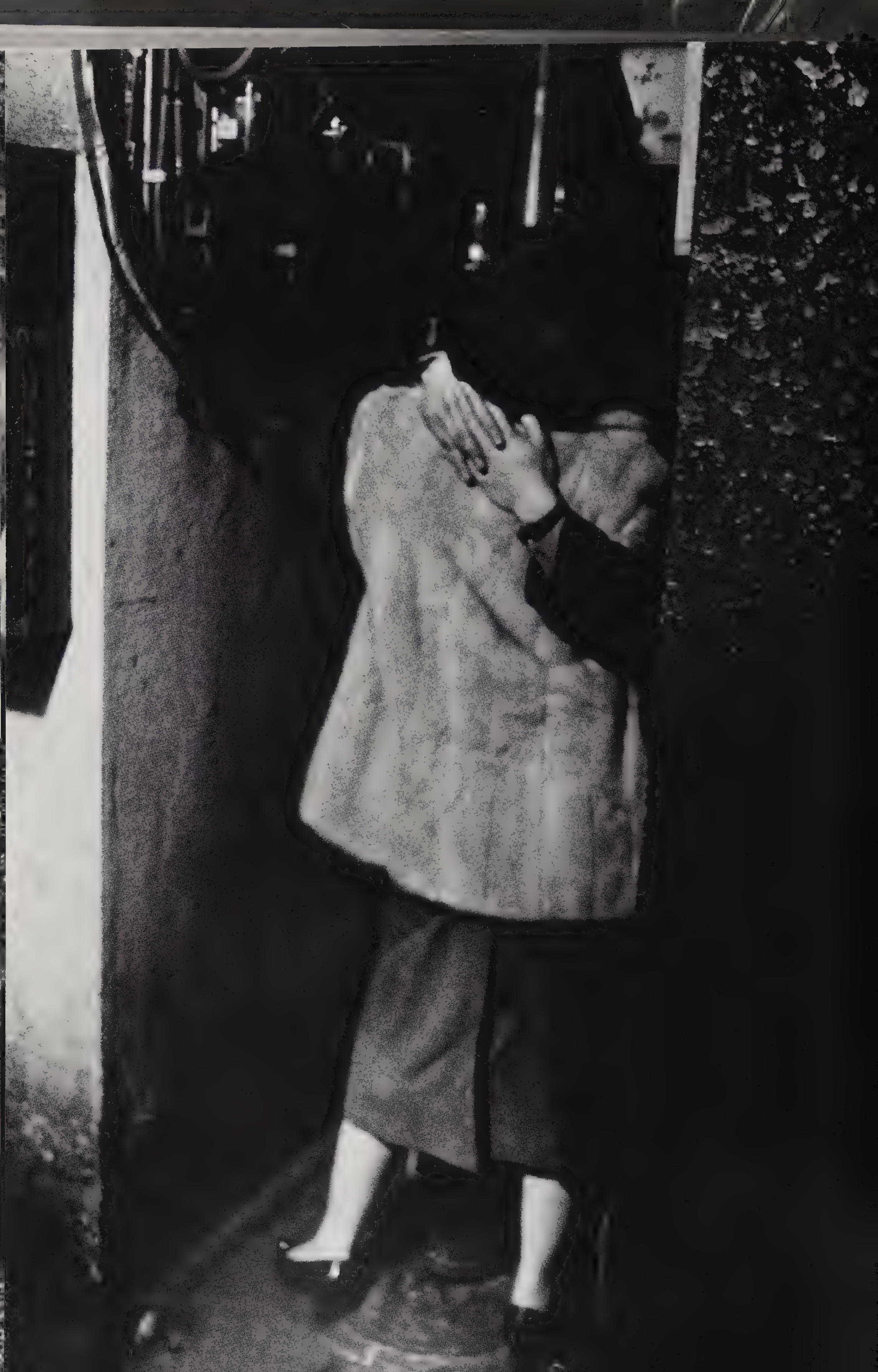



本橋










2F


ABC-MART


ABC-MART
緊急
企画
B1F


NOW SHOWING







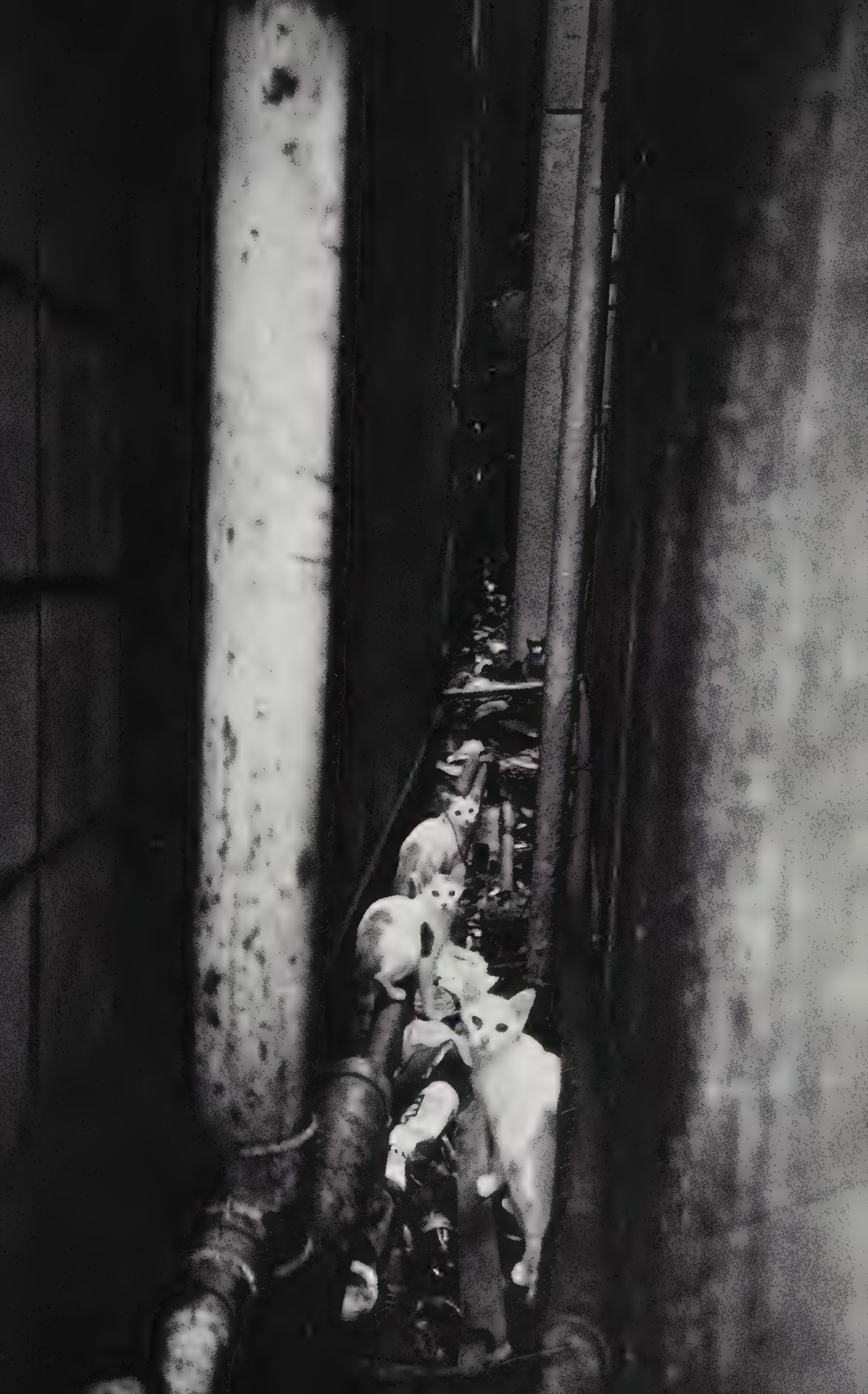





a,motion












も少ない
オケ
マクドナルド
ハンバーガー
道頓堀




特選豪華番組3本立
博徒一家
上映中
15日より21日まで
22日より28

















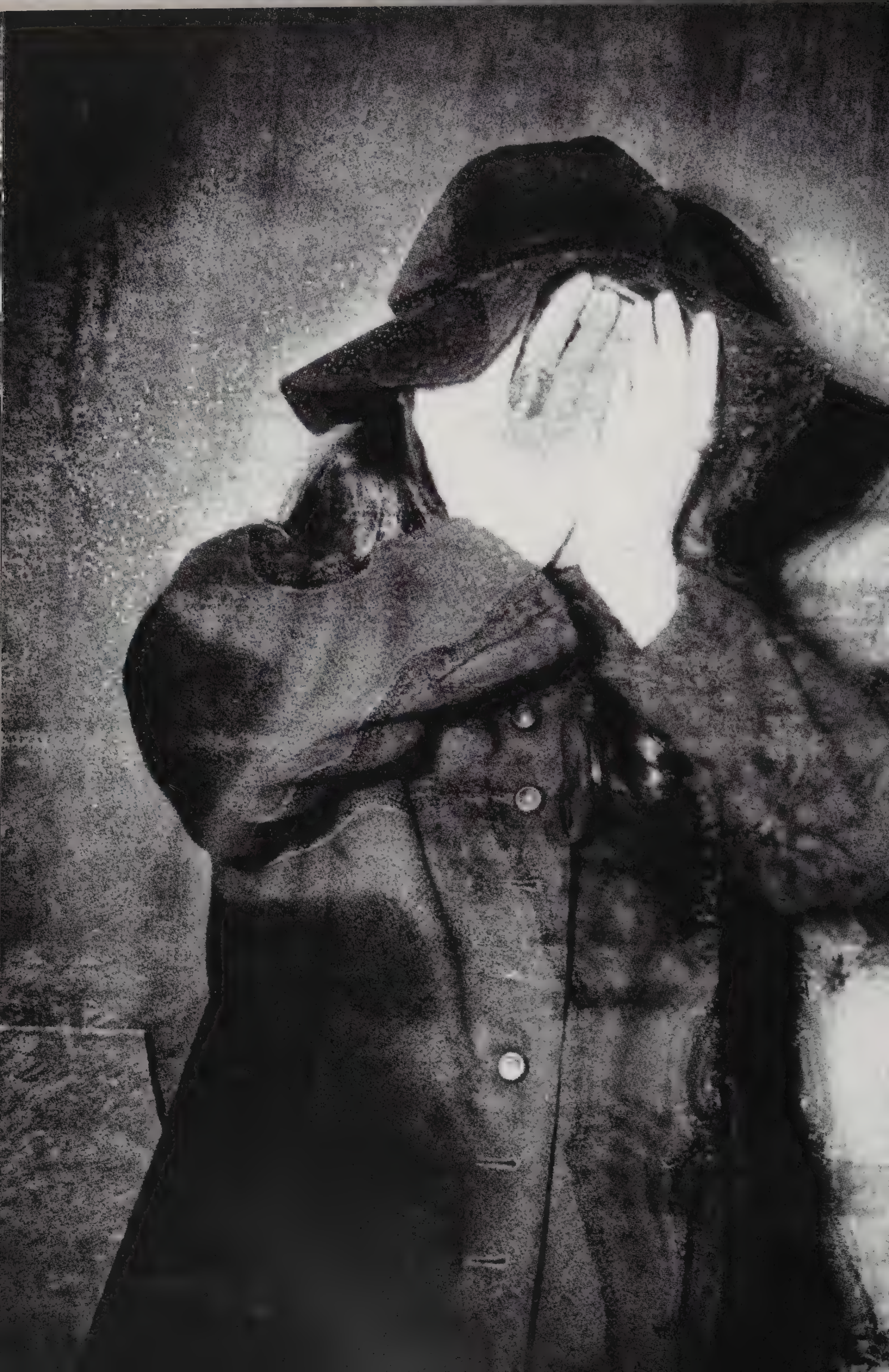







BIG ECH












V-8
Campbell's
PORK & BEANS


120
Dôle










Cartier
Cartier







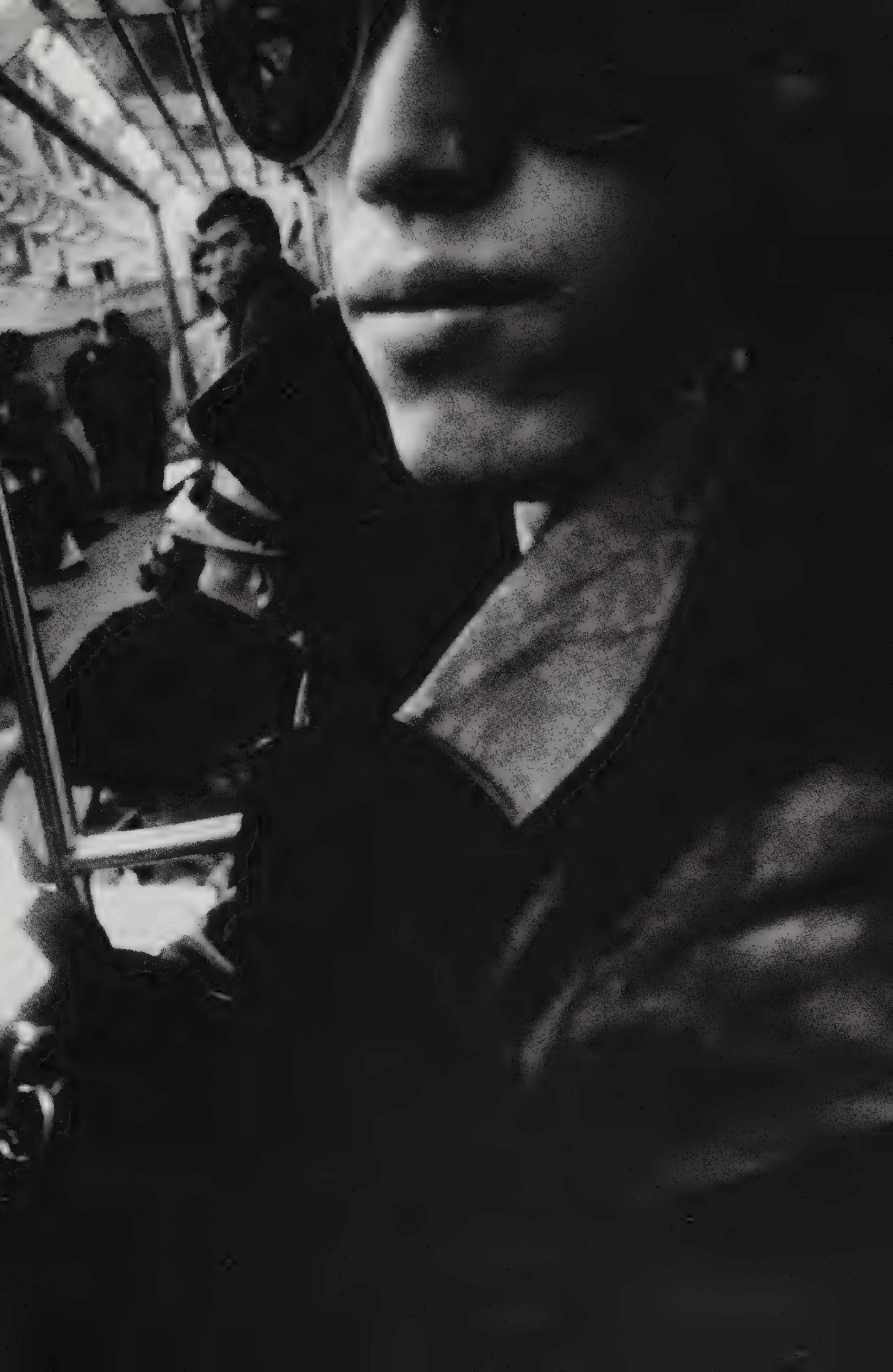


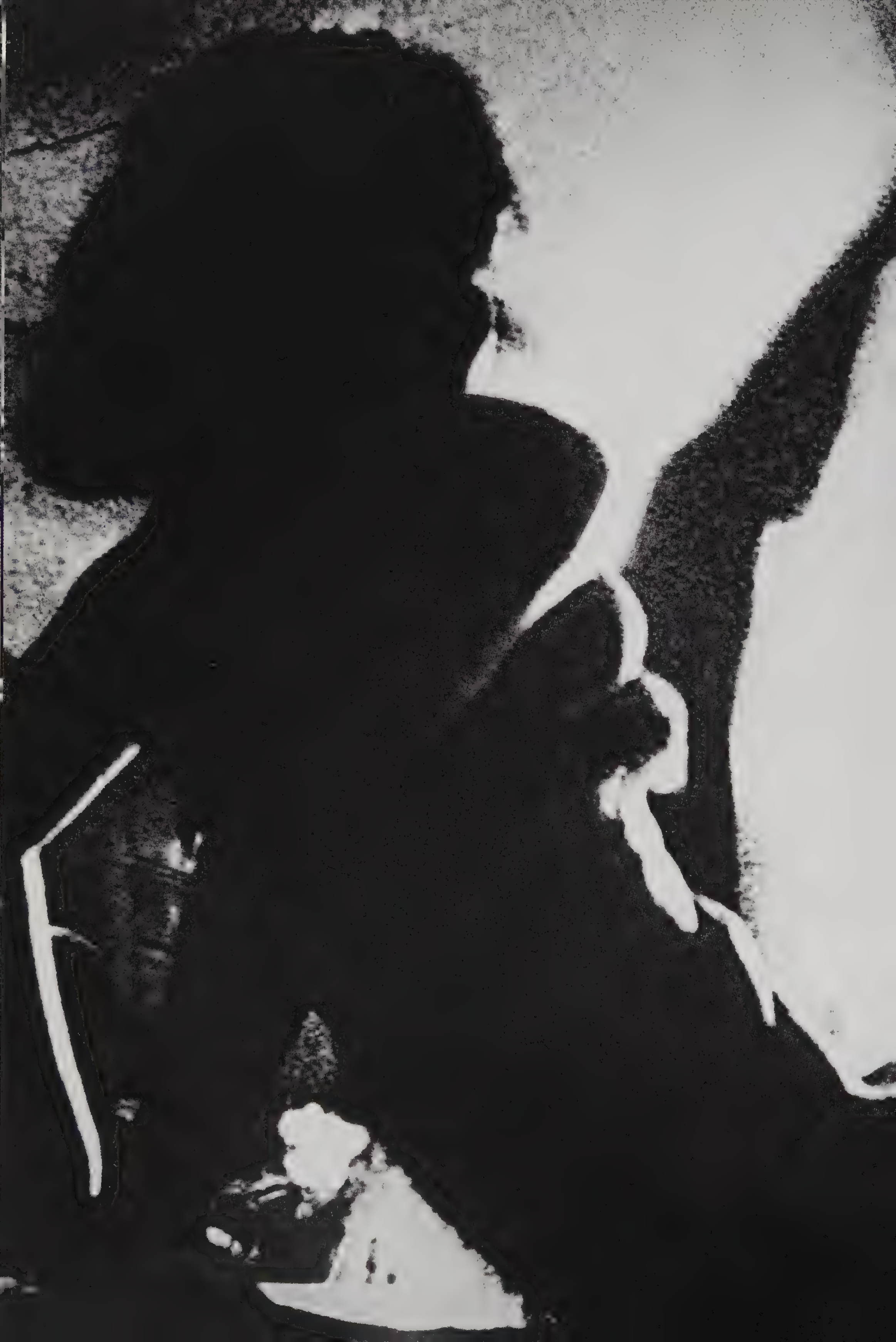



週刊実話











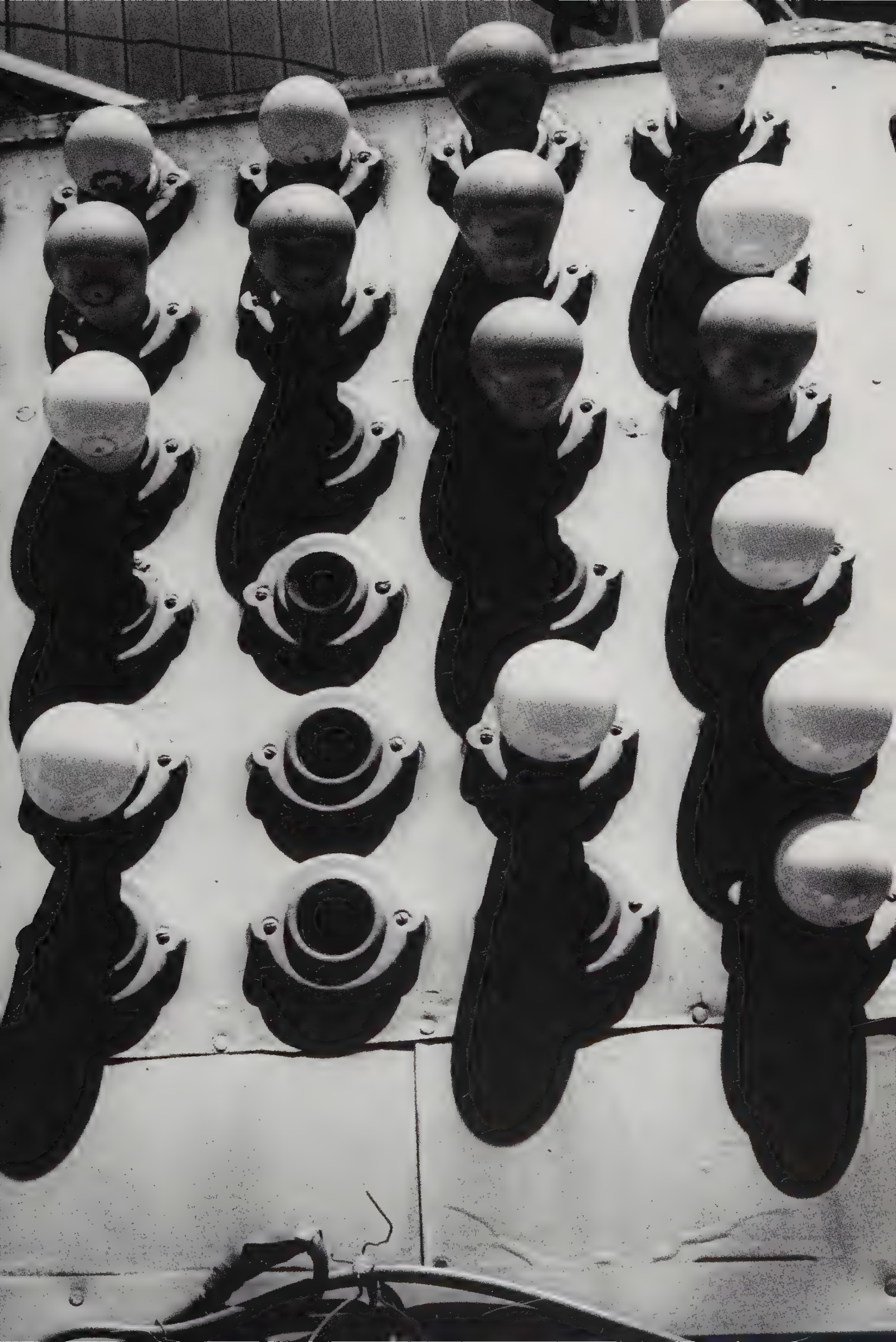




























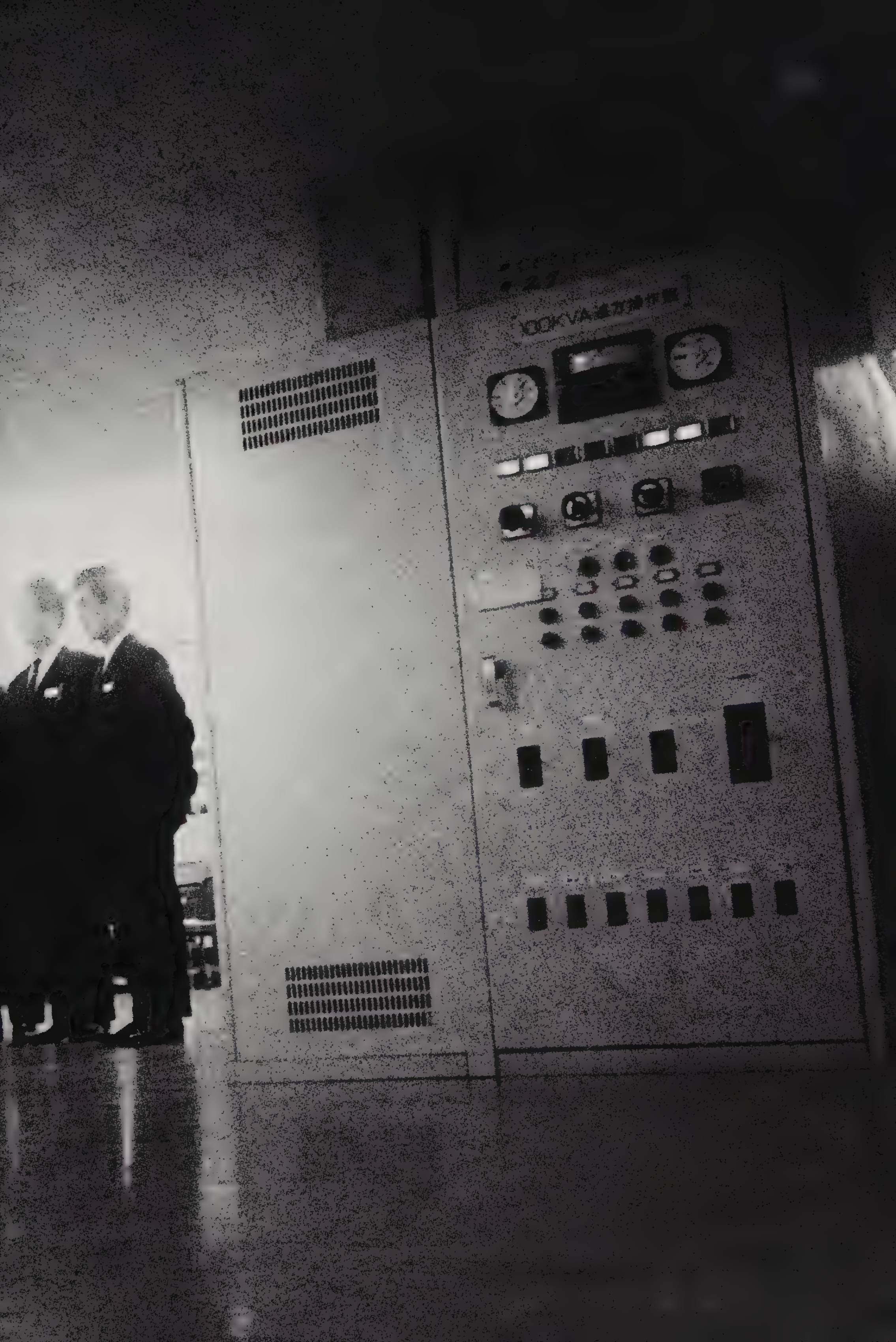













U.S. AIR FO


MAC
50235
















ここ
ここは
神楽坂


ンが新しくなります
CABIN







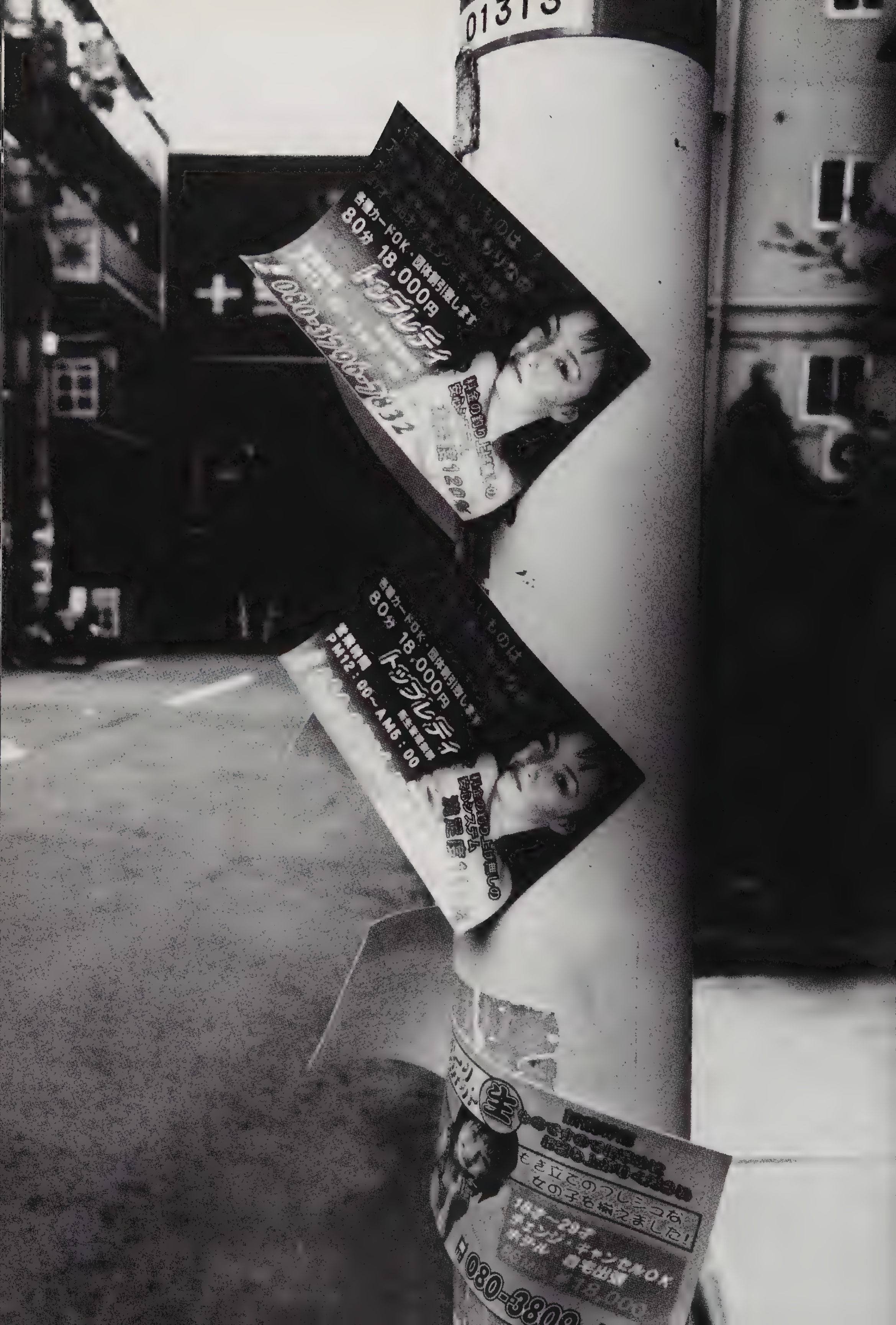

LOVE
MICKEY
B2

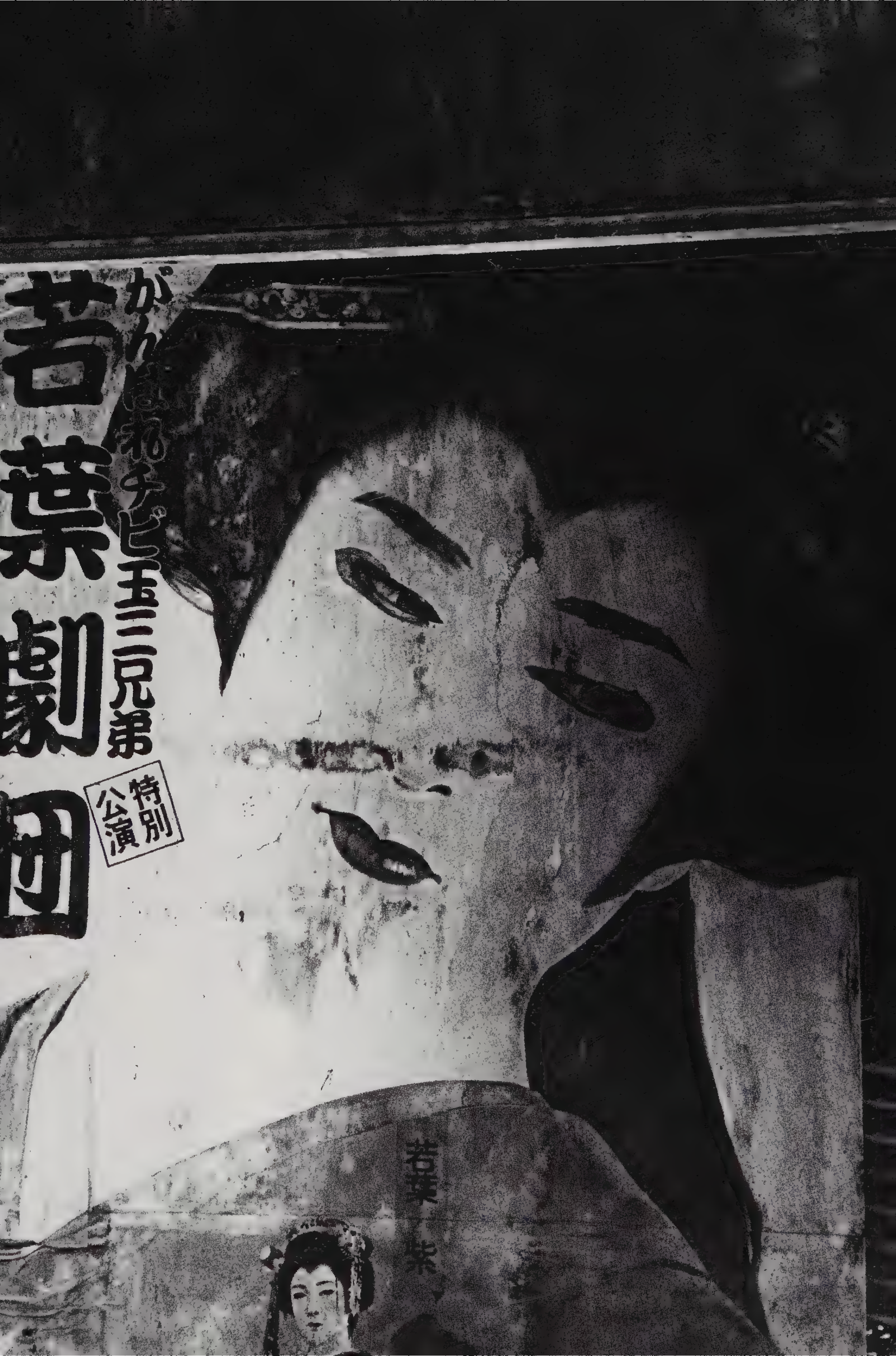


は人間の美し
女が二人で味






01313
80分 18,000円
トップレディ
80分 18,000円
トップレディ
PM12：00～AM6：00
080-3800


若葉劇団
がんばれチビ玉三兄弟
特別公演
若葉











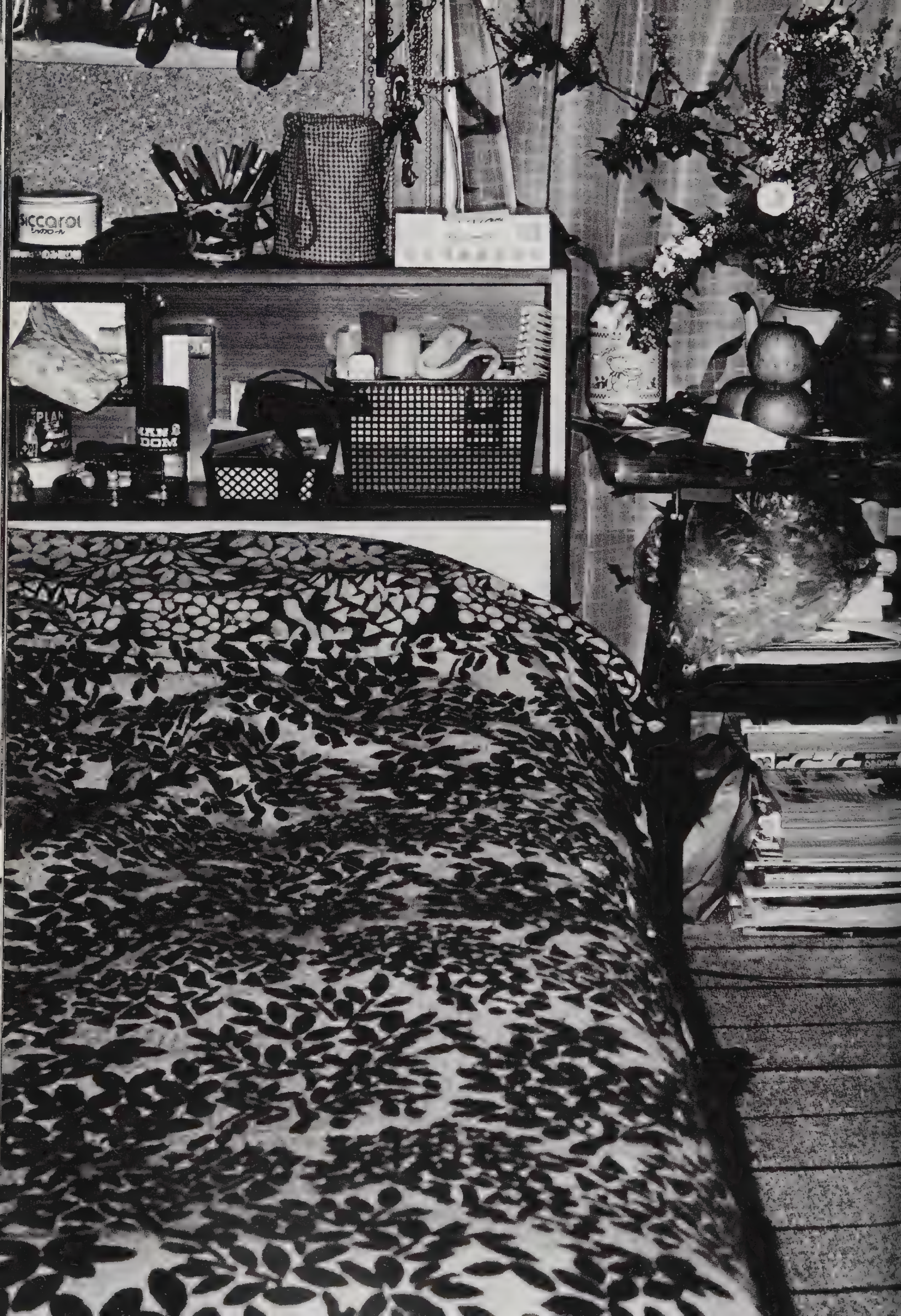











siccarol




院
吉祥寺店
徳川
セーラー服サロン
女学院


スチュワデスサロン
日本航空
豪華で気軽
ホテル南口
ムードサロン
3,000円
吉祥寺店









OWN TOW
11:00
5:00 PM
日曜・祭日
飲み放題
1セット
1,300
EW YORKE
ココ




ICOLOR


アサヒ芸能
新規
最新鋭
全台オー
当店は設定
・入店10~5
・ジャンピュ
・各種プレ
ニュー
新橋ビル
新橋駅
SL
吉川ビル
キムラヤ






248



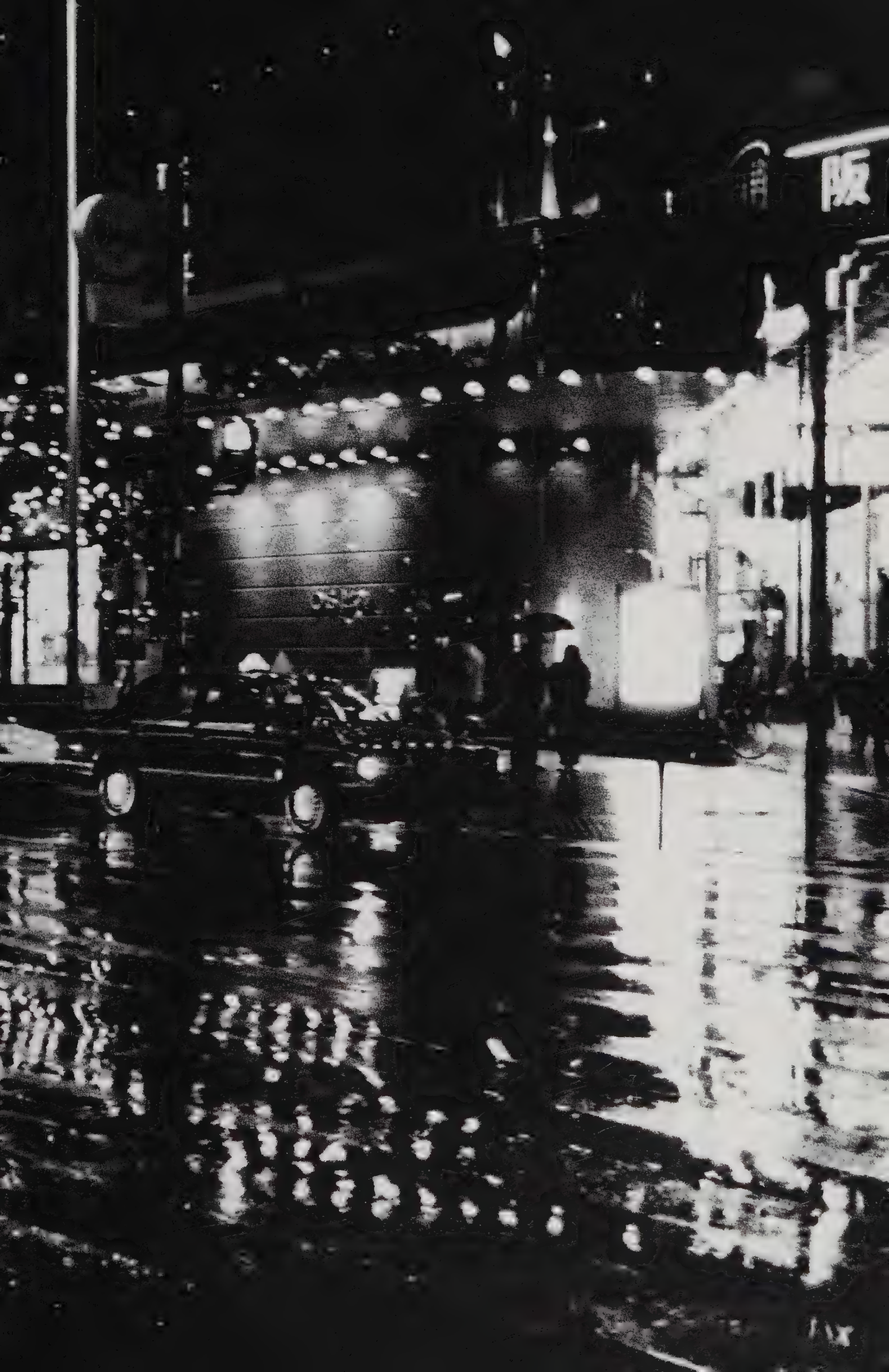

燃える秋
明光
三千里薬


東急イン
明治生命
明治生命
国鉄渋谷








阪




































































PEPSI







一枚




































容共金権国
腐敗汚職
自民党を粛正せよ
国体護持
反共救国に徹せよ
赤尾敏
街頭
安田信託銀行
北方領土返
元号


自転車歩道通行可






KORT


WELCOME TO OU






自家用


天ぷら
うなぎ
1F
おそば
B1F



ラブ
MORINAGA
ぱすたかん
ぱすたかん
Ducky Duck
中央街


ホビー
メトロ


全米No.1
大ヒット!
「もどって私を抱きなさい」
新宿ピカデリー
新宿松竹 354 2414
恐怖の監獄島からの脱出なるか!!
絶賛上映中
ベスト・キッド4
女の弟子も悪くない!—
パット・モリタ
ヒラリー・スワンク
品川 ね
27-59






















ロア




国際
劇場




Reebok

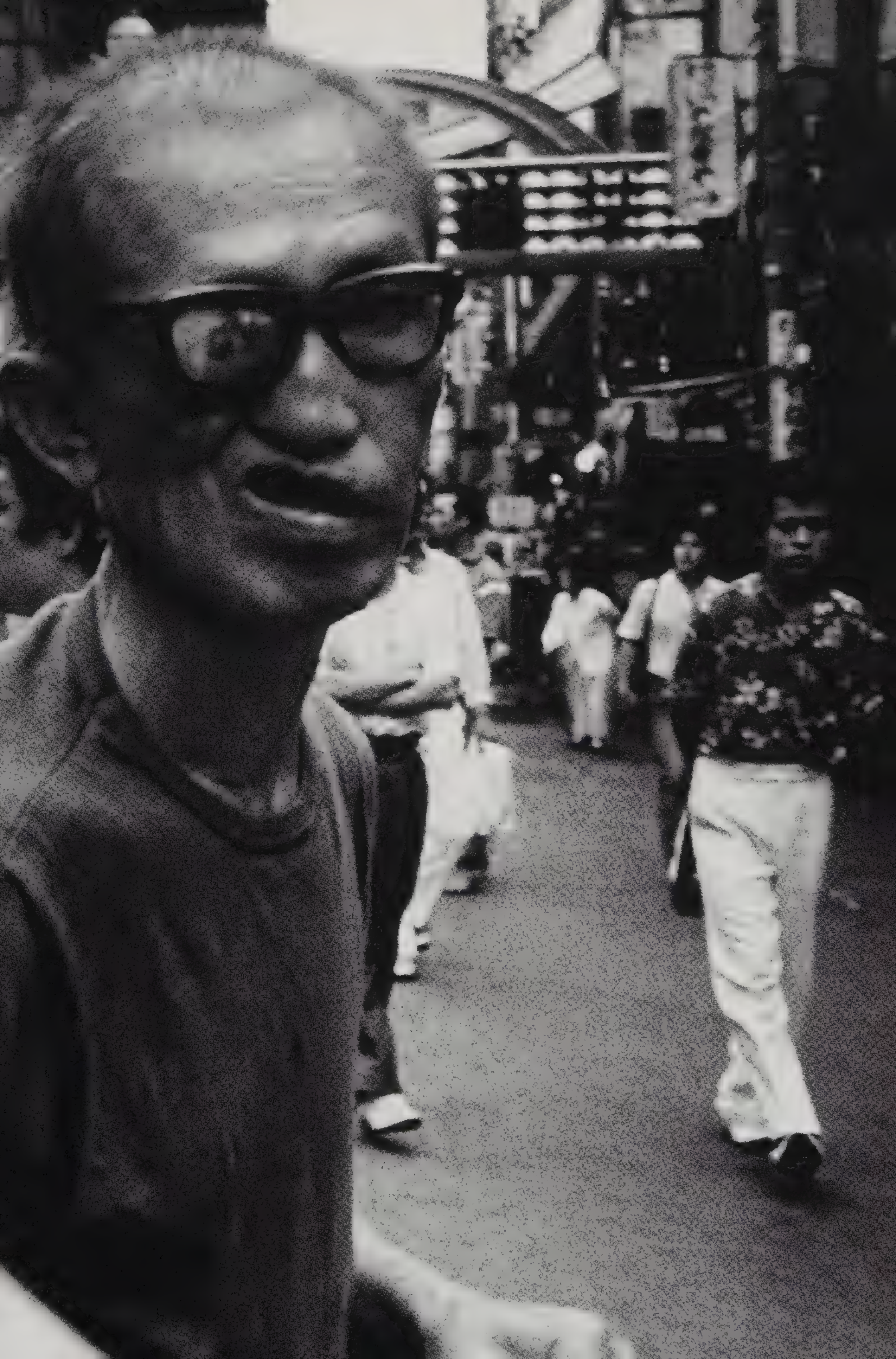


















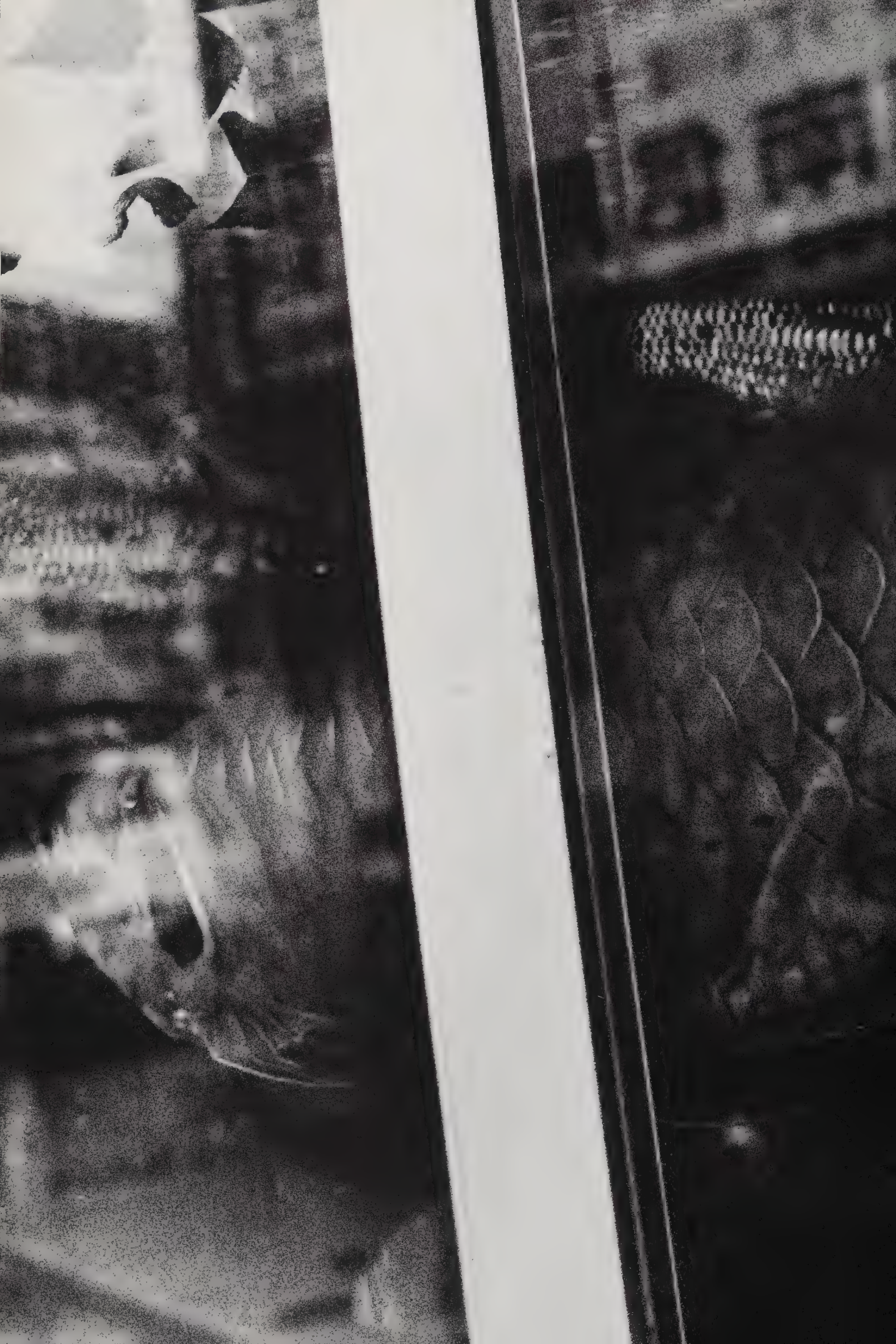



階段を
村さ来
2F
アルバイト
募集
KIDS


甘栗

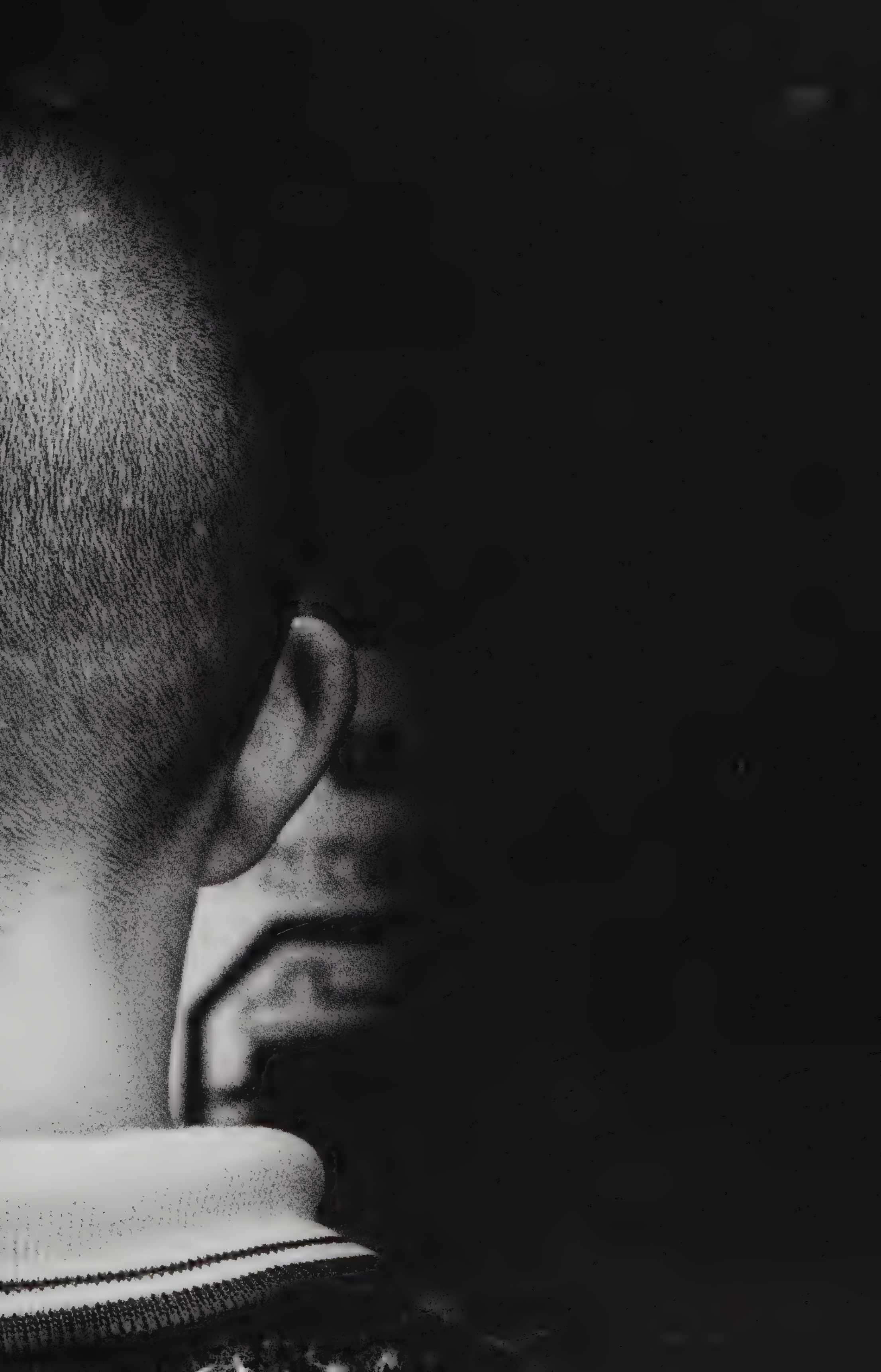






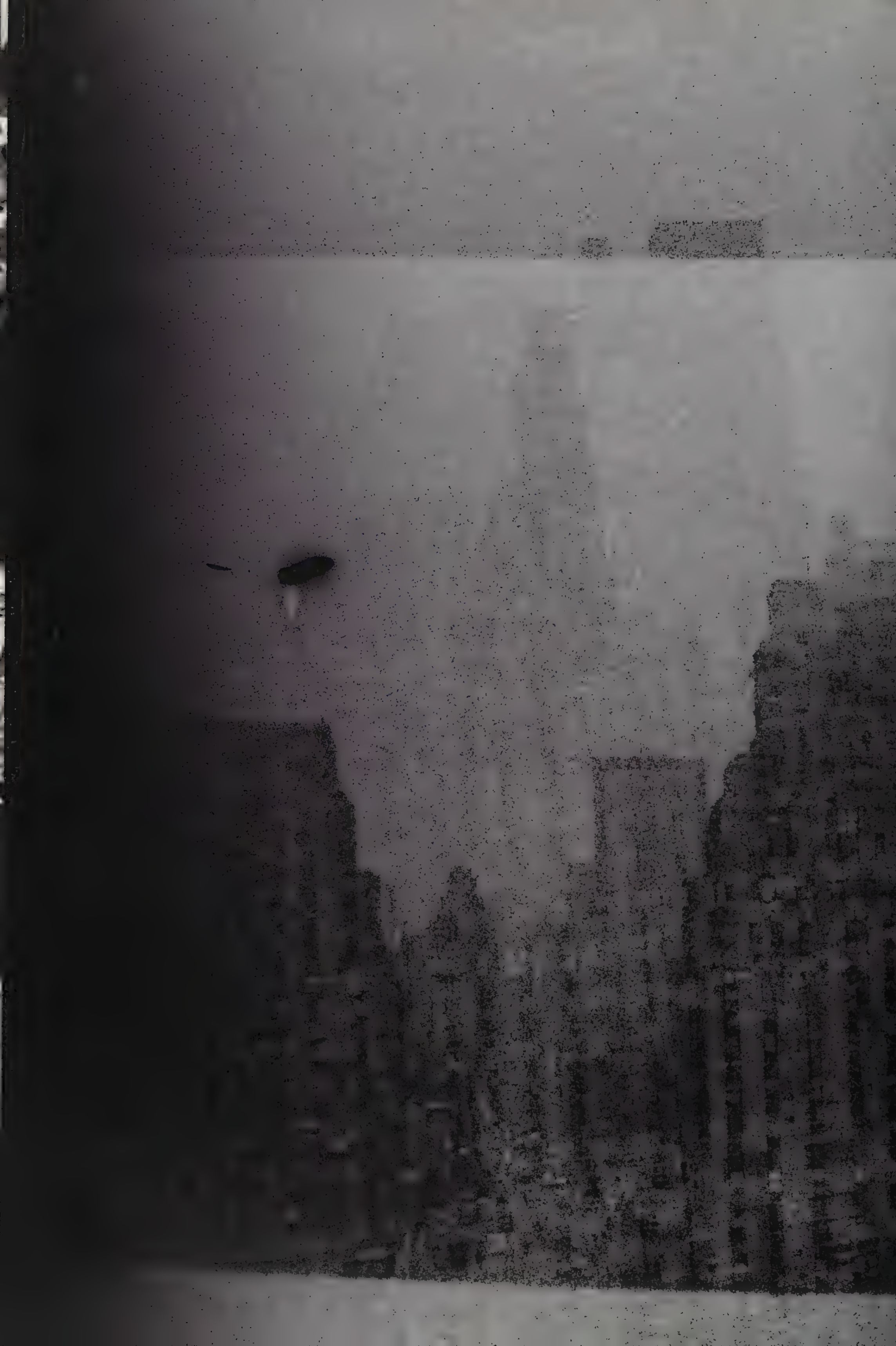







新宿


ジャングルパーク
大人200円
小人100円
下田海中水族館
伊豆急

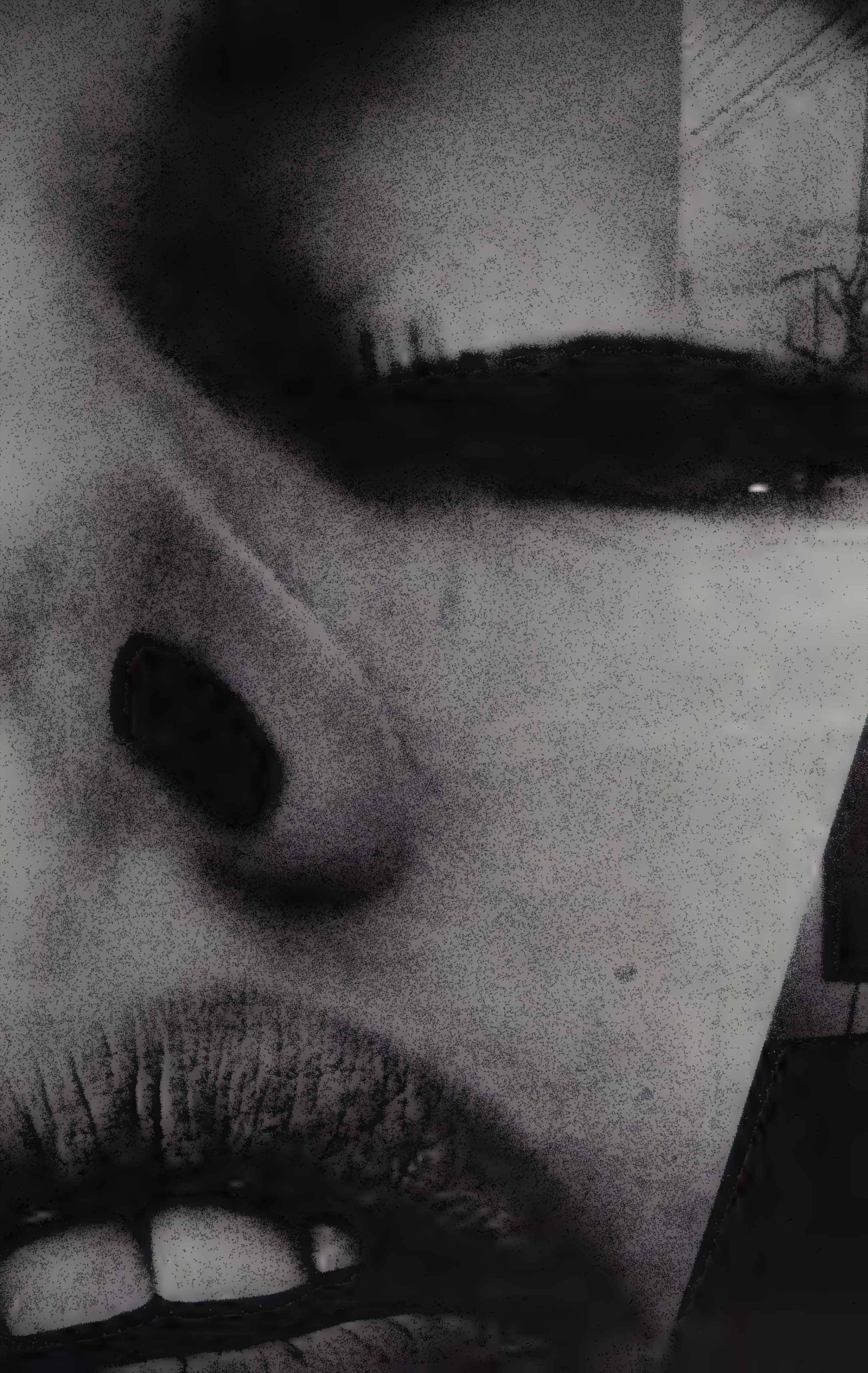

















572





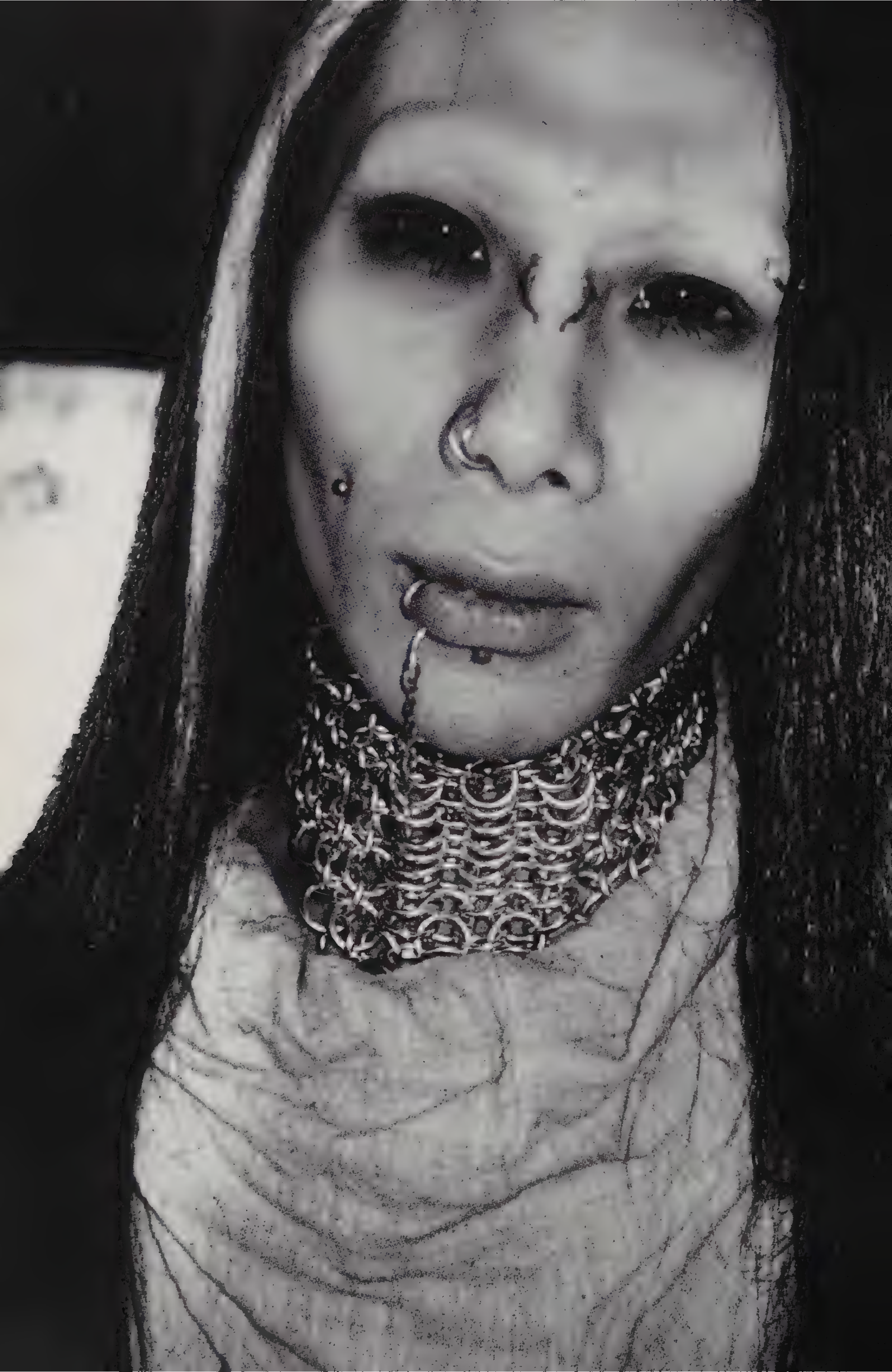



































テアトル新宿
(3352)
1846
A KIYOSHI KUROSAWA FILM
カリスマ
PANAM
CHARISMA
2.26
ロードショー!
CHARISMA
監督・脚本 黒沢 清








YAL
SPORT
SH


BAR





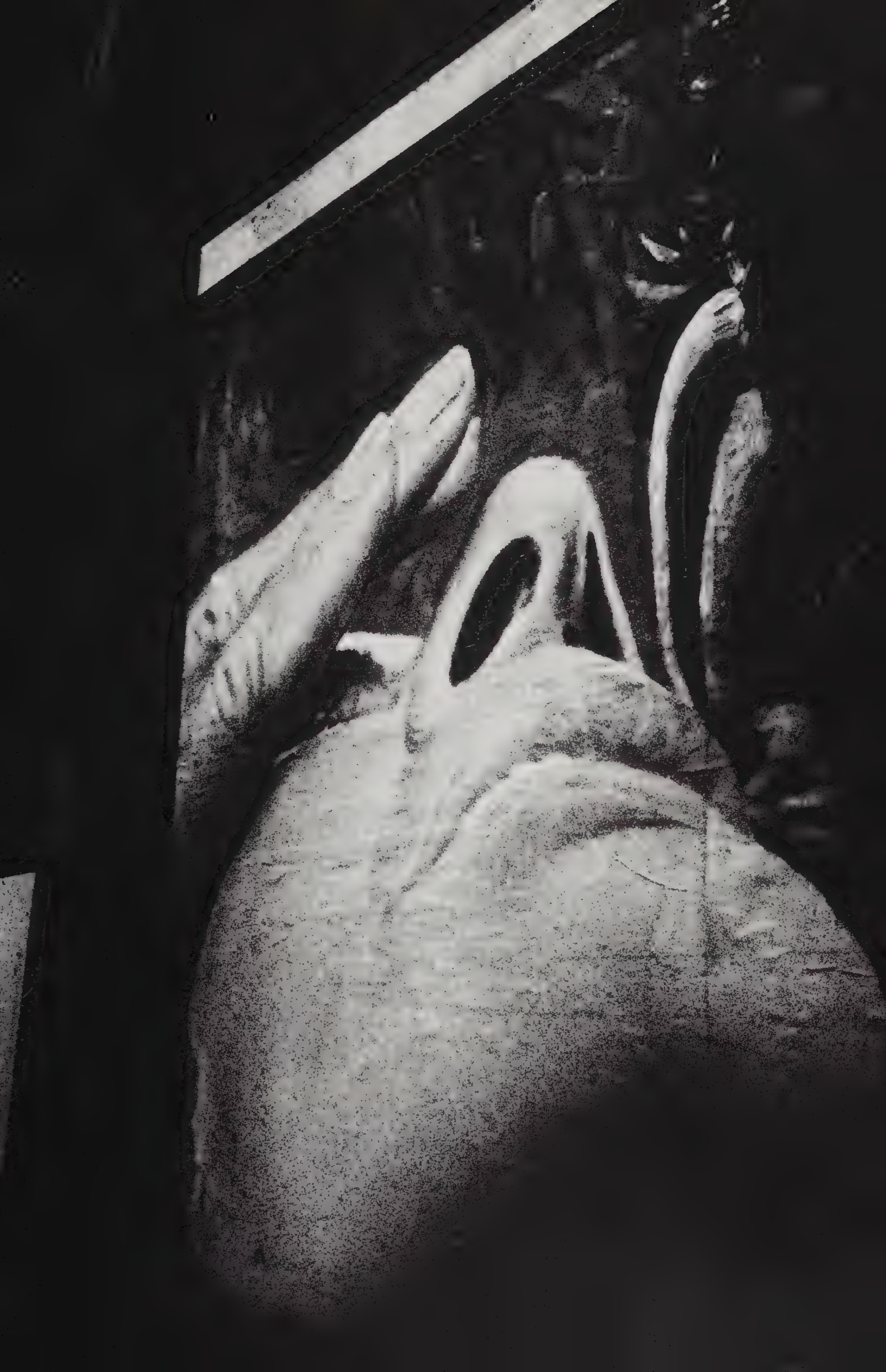









内科
性病科
古川産婦人科
成子坂下バス停・東京信用金庫向い入る
電 368 836
369 554



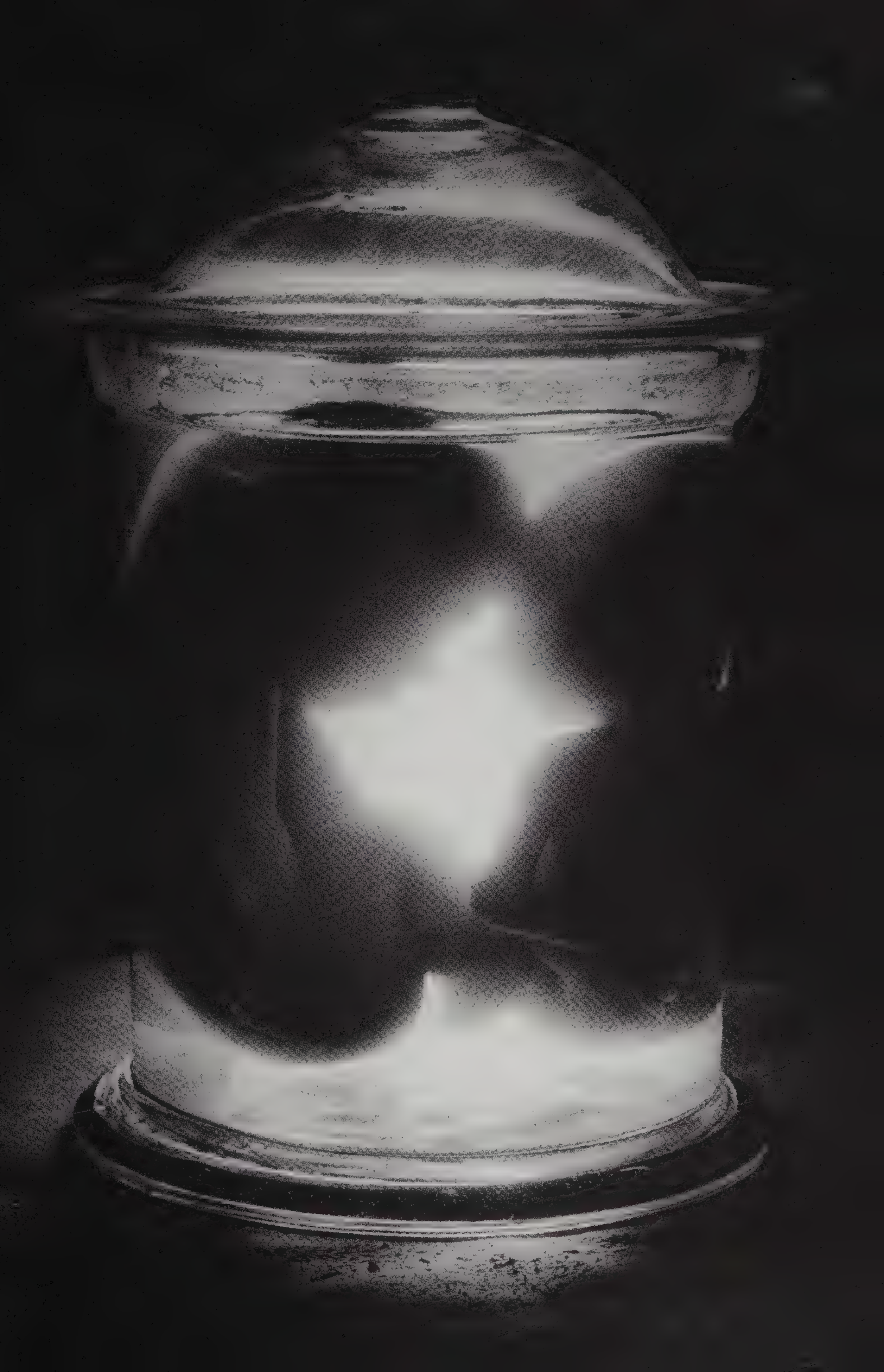



























三菱カラーテ

















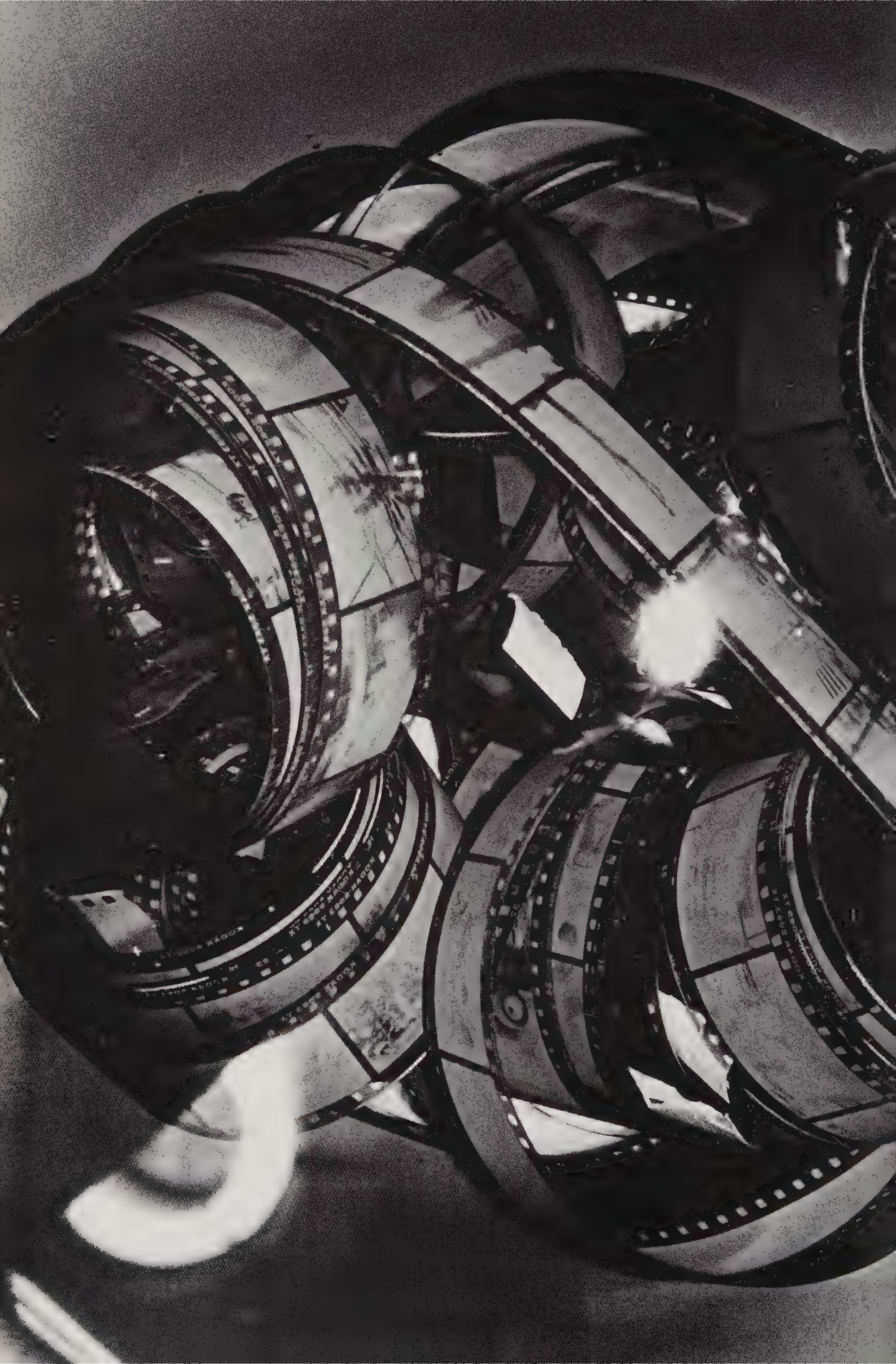







高級アルサロ
ロマンス
ROMANSU
ホステス大募集中!
アルバイト歓迎
当店では只今、貴女を求めています。面談の上高級優遇す。(パートタイム制あり


東京















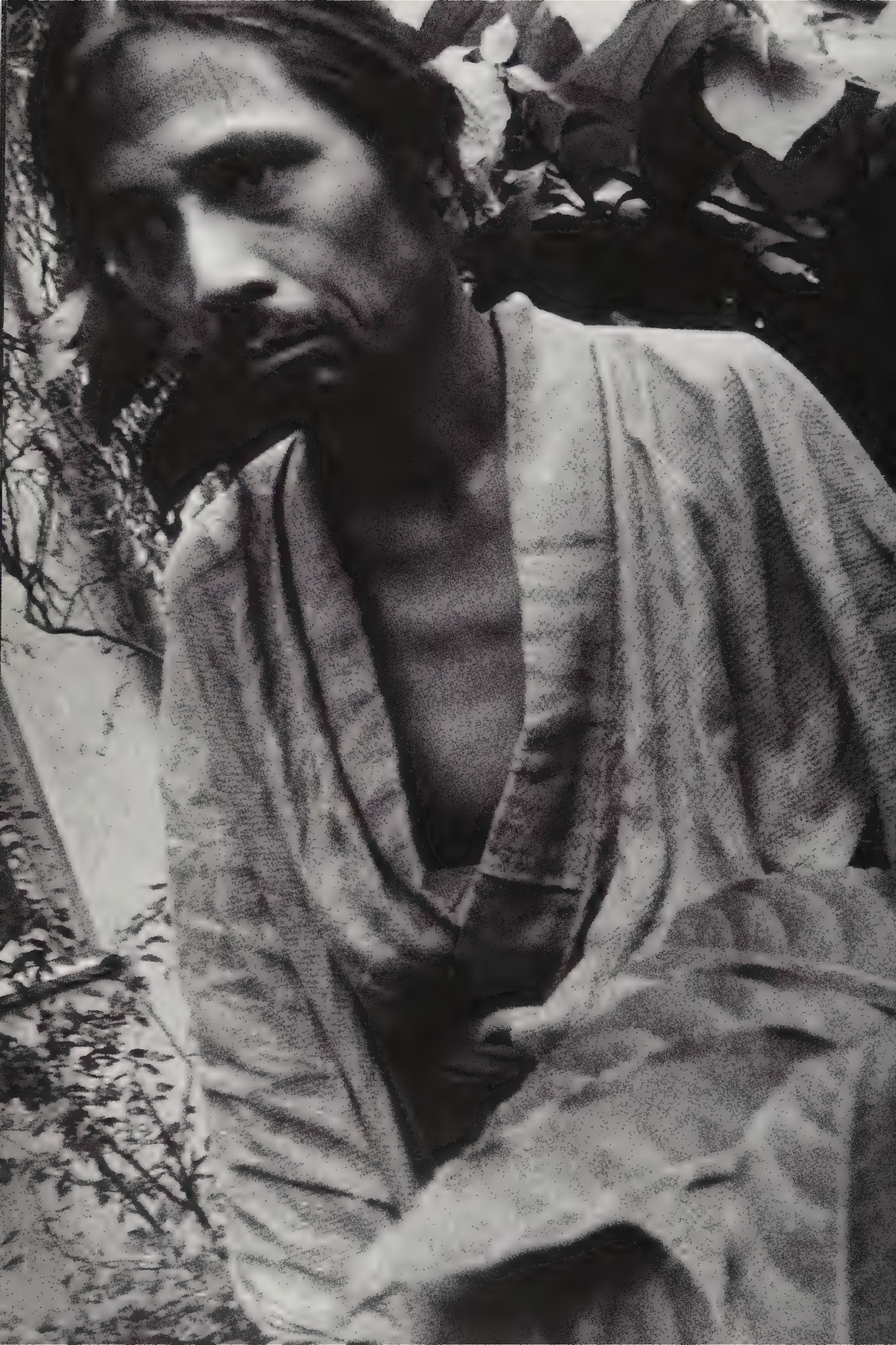




















R-18
深町章監督作品
撮影■稲吉雅志　照明■守田芳彦　編集■酒井正次
現像■東映化学
R-18

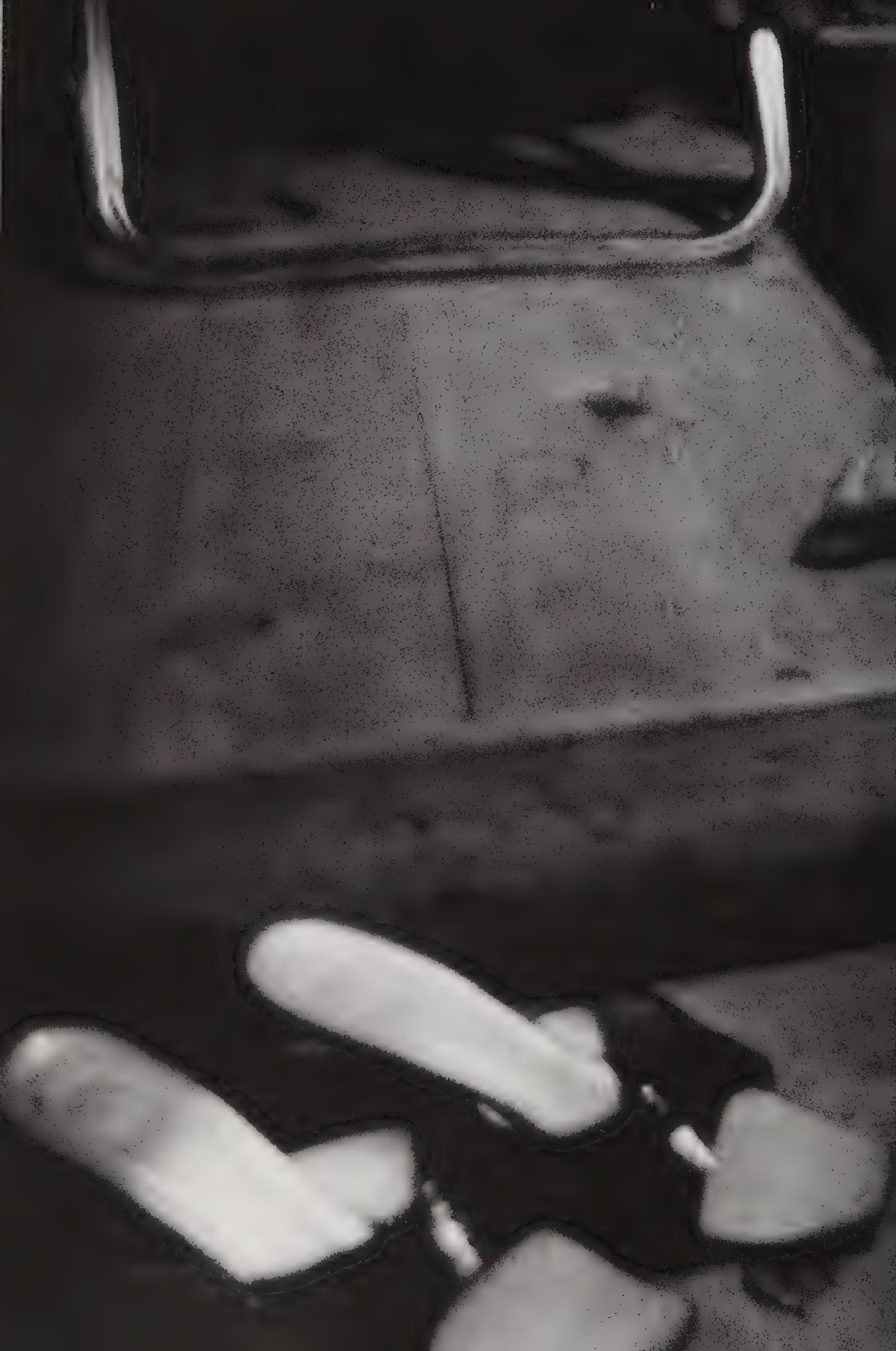









ARAKI
NUMBER









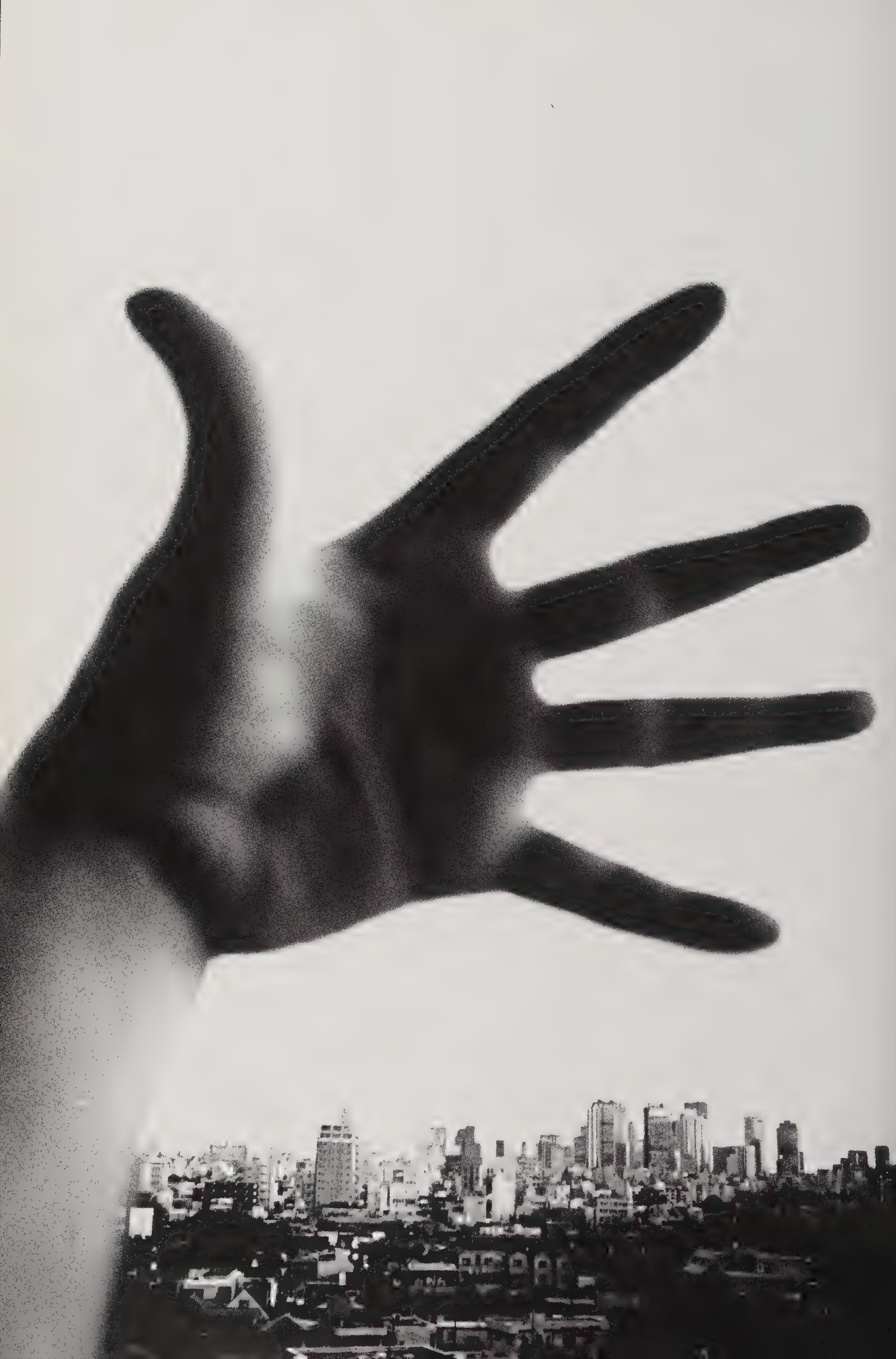




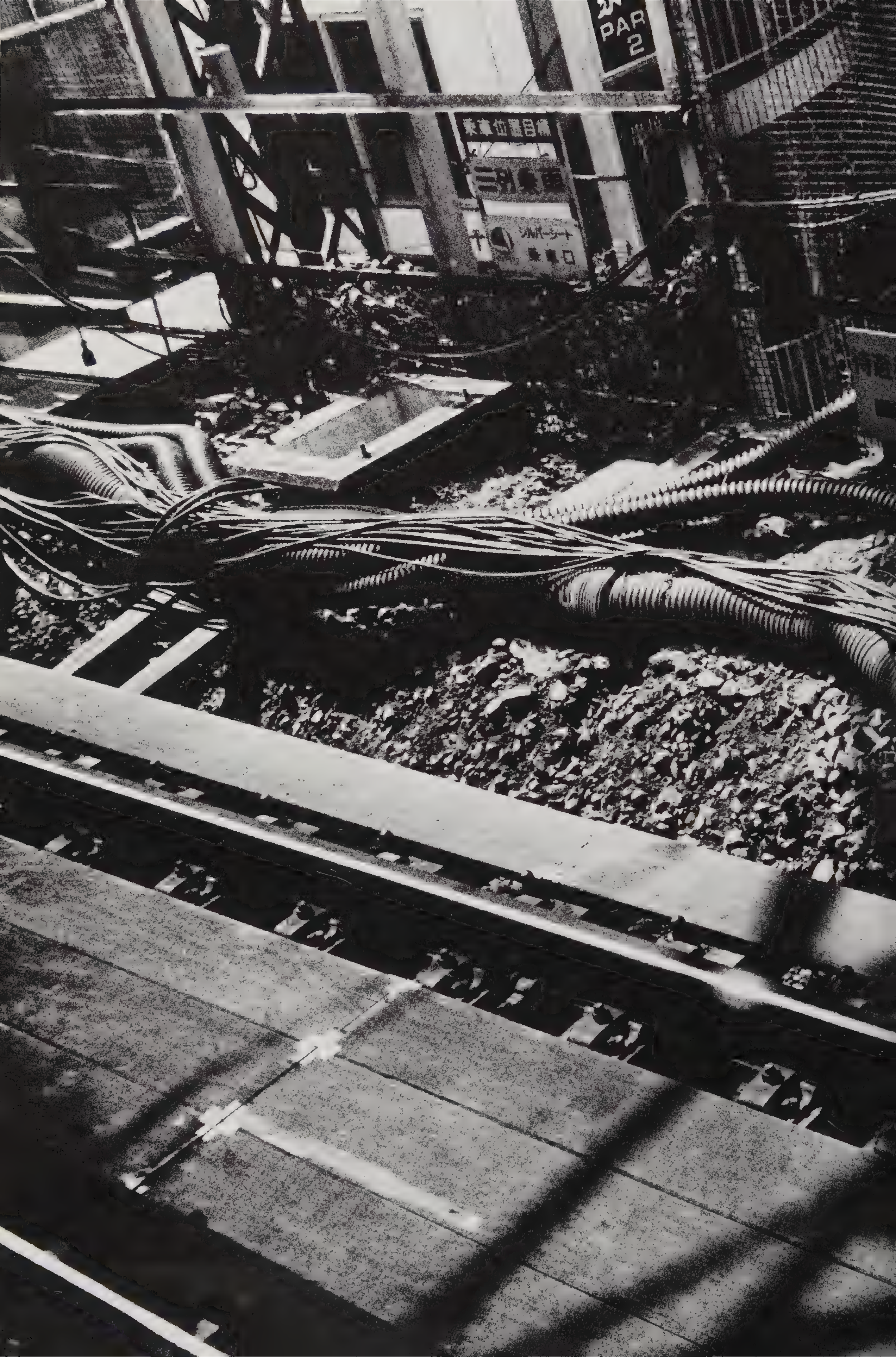


東映
日活
オデヲン座
日活ロマン・ポルノ封切
新宿地区独占封切!
男女社員募集
上映中


クリント・イーストウッド
幸福の条件






PAR
2


ビジネス・ワーキングのショップ
乗車位置目標
三列乗車

















Biography of Daido Moriyama

Francesca Lazzarini

Hiromichi (Daido) Moriyama was born on 10 October 1938 at Ikeda, in Osaka Prefecture. His name, composed of the ideograms hiro (wide) and michi (street), seems to have prefigured his immediate destiny and the future trajectories of a life spent on the road, free from any ties to his native city.

From the time he was born Daido moved with his family from one place to another in Japan. His father worked for an insurance company, which transferred him to Hiroshima, then to a village in the north of the Hokuriku region, and back to East Japan again, first to Ibaraki and later Kyoto.

From 1937 on, the country was engaged in the exhausting Second Sino-Japanese war that, after reaching a deadlock, merged with the Second World War in 1941, which ended tragically for Japan. Moriyama was not directly involved in the conflict but the atmosphere of those dark years was imprinted on his memory, like a familiar smell from childhood.

Towards the end of the 1950s, the family settled in Osaka where Moriyama enrolled at the local school of design. He had already had a problem fitting in at school and things were no better in this city, where his rebellious spirit got the upper hand. He spent his time wandering the streets in the red light district, where the institute was located, only frequenting it to get books out of the library, which were his only companions during his solitary days. He was soon expelled, and in 1955 he started work as an assistant with Tenji Design, the commercial studio founded by the artist Tenji Koyama. Here, too, discipline proved to be an insurmountable obstacle. As Moriyama himself recalls, "… it was already too late, I had become a stray dog through and through, and I could no longer forget the pleasure of being without a collar". The Fujikawa Gallery was located in the same building as the studio, and it was there that Moriyama discovered the artist Tappei Ujiyama, who

introduced him to painting. In 1958, Daido's father died unexpectedly in an accident.

The four years spent in Osaka marked his transition from adolescence to adulthood. These were lonely, restless years of wandering and reading, drinking and investigating. It was then that he became familiar with the work of Andy Warhol and William Klein, whose book *New York* came out in Japan in 1957, and first developed an interest in photography, becoming a pupil of the master Takeji Iwamiya in 1960.

In 1961 Moriyama moved to Tokyo to join VIVO, a group of independent photographers established in 1957 with the aim of analyzing the radical changes in society at that time. After recovering from its war wounds Japan was rapidly becoming a modern country: economic growth was accompanied by accelerated industrialization and urbanization; consumption skyrocketed, and the birth of the new mass society saw traditional Japanese values clash with those of the American culture that was evermore widespread due to the occupying US troops. The group, which included, among others, Eikoh Hosoe and Shomei Tomatsu, was on the point of disbanding, but even this first contact with its members opened up new horizons for Moriyama. He became Hosoe's assistant, collaborating with him until 1963, when he went freelance. Four years later, Moriyama was named Best New Artist by the Japan Photo Critics Association.

During those years, photographs were mostly commissioned by magazines like *Asahi Journal*, *Asahi Camera*, *Camera Mainichi* and *The Modern Eye*, which were the major vehicles for popularizing the authors' works. (The first gallery devoted to photography, Zeit-Foto Salon, did not open in Tokyo until much later, in 1978, actually experiencing a fair amount of hostility from photographers at the beginning).[1] It was then that Moriyama made contact with a number of publishers and journalists, and in 1964 Tomatsu also introduced him to the photographer and publisher Takuma Nakahira with whom he established a close friendship and professional relationship. From the summer of 1965, they both lived in Zushi, south of Yokohama and, inspired by Tomatsu's series *Occupation*, Moriyama began to photograph the streets of the American base at Yokosuka. The series he produced was published in 1968 in his first important volume, *Nippon Gekijo Shashincho (Japan: A Photo Theater)*,[2] which also featured *Pantomime* – a 1966 series depicting foetuses preserved in formalin at a private maternity home – and the series *Nippon Gekijo (Japan Theater)* shot on tour with the experimental theatre group founded by Shuji Terayama, who penned the introduction to the volume and with whom Moriyama launched the magazine *Scandal* towards the end of that year. In this book, theatre and theatricality are the keys to viewing and interpreting everyday life, which at the time was becoming increasingly incorporated in a consumption and entertainment system.

Like all the work Moriyama would produce in the future, *Nippon Gekijo Shashincho* broke completely with everything that Japanese documentary photography had stood for until that moment. Images of theatre actors or American soldiers were mixed with scenes of daily life and glimpses of the city, without any reference to context or narrative structure as a whole. Fragments mingled in a single stream characterized by an immediate and instinctive style that made no aesthetic concessions.

However, Noriko Tsutatani,[3] curator at the Shimane Art Museum, notes that there is a marked difference between the works executed between 1965 and 1967 and the various series produced after 1968, in what she calls the "Provoke Era". While all the photographs in the first volume primarily focus on people, in the following period the accent is on the photographer's experience as he presses the button, and

the unique and unrepeatable atmosphere associated with this.

In 1968 Moriyama read, on Nakahira's recommendation, *On the Road* by Jack Kerouac. The culture of the Beat Generation further influenced his imagery, which was already inspired by the work of artists like Andy Warhol and William Klein and of writers like Yukio Mishima and James Baldwin. In August of the same year, Moriyama began travelling the roads of Japan, with no specific destination, first in an old, beaten-up Toyota and then hitch-hiking, ready to photograph anything that caught his eye along the way. These photos were subsequently published under the title *On the Road*, and also included in the *Kariudo (Hunter)* series in 1972.

However, 1968 was above all the year that *Provoke* came out, an avant-garde magazine that would radically change Japanese photography in the years to come. Co-founded by Nakahira, the photographer Yutaka Takanashi, the poet Takahiko Okada and the critic Koji Taki, the magazine bore a subtitle – "Provocative Materials for Thinkers"[4] – which aptly summed up the idea on which it was based: in a world in which words have lost their power, only photography can gather fragments of reality and present them as thought-provoking material.

In 1969, Moriyama published two works in the magazine. The first, *Eros*, which appeared in the second issue, was a series of intimate nudes taken in a hotel room where the photographer spent the night with a woman. In the blurred, dark, grainy photos the woman is never clearly visible or completely recognizable. The accent is on the erotic atmosphere, the sensuality of her body, the feeling of intimacy and sadness after sex. The second work, published in the third issue of the magazine, consists in a series of photographs taken at night in a drugstore in the Aoyama district of Tokyo. Outside the darkness is rent by flashes from the battle between the police and students belonging to the movement against ANPO (US–Japan Security Treaty), while inside the store American products invade the shelves. These images, like those of *Eros*, are pervaded by an irrepressible feeling of desperation.

In actual fact, *Provoke* was short-lived, closing after only three issues. However, it lasted long enough to spread a completely new idea of photography in Japan: photography does not represent reality objectively but communicates the experience of a moment. Aesthetic composition was not important, since the aim was not to create beautiful photography. Every shot was of equal worth, even the ones that were fluffed, wrong, out of focus or grainy, or taken without framing or with closed eyes.

The same applied to photos of photographs. In 1969 Moriyama published in *Asahi Camera* a work entitled *Accident*, composed of three different series: *Images of a Certain Seven Days* (reproductions of magazine, TV and newspaper images), *Accidents* (reproductions of a poster on road safety put up by the Tokyo Metropolitan Police) and *Star* (images of scandals involving celebrities taken from the tabloids). The idea was born as Moriyama remembered the devastating effect the images of John F. Kennedy's death had on him when they appeared in the media. In his view, there is no distinction between reality that is experienced and reality that exists in an image: they are both evidence and have the same epistemic value.

Hence, the "Provoke Era" was a period of experimentation and reflection on photography, on its essence and on the role of the photographer. Like Nakahira and other colleagues, Moriyama went as far as affirming the principle of "anonymity": the photographer selects, he is the first viewer of an image rather than its creator and he must forego any foolish artistic ambitions because the essence of photography is knowing how to capture the experience

of a moment. In 1970 Moriyama prepared his first solo exhibition at Plaza Dick, Tokyo, remaining faithful to the principles that had guided his previous research. The show was entitled *Scandal* and included a cycle of enlarged reproductions of advertising images.

In 1972 *Kariudo (Hunter)*[5] came out. In this volume images from the *On the Road* series were combined with new photographs taken on the streets of Japan. The preface to the book was written by the graphic designer Tadanori Yokoo, with whom Moriyama had made his first trip to New York a year earlier.[6] *Kariudo* is the definitive affirmation of Moriyama's erratic spirit, his roaming unfettered by social impositions and conventions, his anarchic nature. It is here that the image of the stray dog appears in a book for the first time, which was destined to become a sort of "self-portrait" of the photographer.

The stances developed by Moriyama are taken to the extreme in the volume *Shashin yo Sayonara (Farewell Photography)*,[7] also published in 1972, which is considered by many critics to be the photographer's most remarkable work. The volume is composed of images that are completely unrecognizable, shots that are randomly framed and others with improbable exposures, and scratchy, muddy, grainy photos consisting of shadows and vivid flashes.

This book marked another – negative – transition: Moriyama sank into a profound crisis, aggravated by the use of drugs and alcohol, from which he would not emerge until the early 1980s. The subjects of his images from this period are nature and the rural areas of traditional Japan, in which he seemed to find refuge. His stirring photographs of *Cherry Blossoms* (1974), so different from the usual delicate depictions of cherry trees in bloom, and *Tono monogatari (Tales of Tono)*[8] of 1974, inspired by the folk tales written in 1910 by the ethnologist Kunio Yanagita, evoke a world far away from the urban settings through which Daido wandered for years but undoubtedly possess the essential character of his previous works, in the sense that each photograph captures the emotion aroused by a real experience.

After a long break, Moriyama started taking photographs again in 1982, for the book *Hikari to Kage (Light & Shadow)*.[9] Once again the city forms the backdrop to the photographer's instinctive roving. As usual, his gaze brings out apparently insignificant details, but now the subject is more prominent, the images are sharper and seem to evoke the chiaroscuros of life and its contrasts with a different emotional intensity.

The years prior to his "comeback" were devoted to teaching and to constant theoretical reflection, which produced the essay *A Dialogue with Photography* in 1985.[10] During the same period, the editor of *Asahi Camera* Tanno Kiyozaku tried to make Moriyama pick up his camera again by encouraging him to write, giving him a monthly feature in the magazine. The fifteen essays and photographs that appeared as *Memories of a Dog* would be published in an eponymous volume in 2004, whose images and texts make it one of the most intense autobiographies.

From the second half of the 1980s on, Moriyama's career really took off: he showed his work in various Japanese museums and was also invited to participate in exhibitions at prestigious European and American venues. In 1987 he opened a gallery in Tokyo, which was first called room 801 and then PHOTO DAIDO, where he presented a rich programme of exhibitions until the gallery closed in 1992.

During this period he also completed two new research projects. The first was *Nakaji Heno Tabi (Journey to Nakaji)*,[11] devoted to Yasui Nakaji, a photographer active in the first half of the twentieth century, whose work drew on both pictorialism and the documentary. Composed of images of people and objects as well as landscapes, the project appears to reaffirm that

photography is neither aesthetic research nor objective documentation but something halfway between that "whispers in our ears of the present and the future".[12] The second project, *San ru e no tegami (Lettre à St. Lou)*[13] is devoted, as the title indicates, to the inventor of photography Joseph Nicéphore Niépce and the celebrated view he took from the window in his summer home at Saint-Loup-de-Varennes. The actual protagonist of all these images is memory, or rather a memory composed of light that only the approach that Moriyama developed over time could have evoked. It is not a question of rediscovering images that faithfully conjure the past but of moving around in a place and letting oneself be carried away by emotion, then pressing the button at the precise moment in which the flow of the world and that of inner time coincide.

In 1989 the first anthology of the photographer's works, *Moriyama Daido 1970–1979*,[14] was published. This was the prelude to an even more intense period of activity. During the 1990s he was engaged in new exhibitions and publications – including the volumes devoted to the city, produced by the fashion house Hysteric Glamour[15] – and the reprinting of some of his best books. The success he had achieved, also at the international level, was crowned in 1999 with the major retrospective *Daido Moriyama: Stray Dog* at the San Francisco MoMA.

Moriyama has never stopped photographing since. He continues to travel the roads of the world and to filter every experience through his gaze, never betraying his free and anarchic spirit. And always remaining faithful to the stray dog inside him.

[1] See Minoru Shimizu, *An Interview with Etsuro Ishihara*, enclosed with *Daido Moriyama. The Complete Works*, Vol. 4 (Tokyo: Daiwa Radiator Factory & Taka Ishii Gallery, 2004), p. 8.

[2] *Nippon Gekijo Shashincho (Japan: A Photo Theater)* (Tokyo: Muromachi Shobo, 1968).

[3] Noriko Tsutatani, *An Essay on Daido Moriyama – for "The Provoke" Era*, enclosed with *Daido Moriyama. The Complete Works*, Vol.1 (Tokyo: Daiwa Radiator Factory & Taka Ishii Gallery, 2003), p. 3.

[4] Kazuo Nishii, *Daido Moriyama, Phaidon 55* (London: Phaidon Press Limited, 2001), p. 6.

[5] *Kariudo (Hunter)* (Tokyo: Chuokoronsha, 1972).

[6] In 1974, the volume *New York: Another Country* was self-published.

[7] *Shashin yo Sayounara (Farewell Photography)* (Tokyo: Shashin Hyoronsha, 1972).

[8] *Tono Monogatari (Tales of Tono)* (Tokyo: Asahi Sonorama Co Limited, 1976).

[9] *Hikari to Kage (Light & Shadow)* (Tokyo: Tojusha, 1982).

[10] *A Dialogue with Photography* (Tokyo: Seikyusha, 1985).

[11] *Nakaji Heno Tabi (Journey to Nakaji)* (Yokohama: Sokyusha, 1972).

[12] Citation from the catalogue *Nakaji Heno Tabi*, quoted in Michitaka Ota, *About Mr. Moriyama*, enclosed with *Daido Moriyama. The Complete Works*, Vol. 2 (Tokyo: Daiwa Radiator Factory & Taka Ishii Gallery, 2003), p. 4.

[13] *San ru e no tegami (Lettre à St. Lou)* (Tokyo: Kawade Shobo Shinsha, 1990).

[14] *Moriyama Daido 1970–1979* (Yokohama: Sokyusha, 1989).

[15] *Tokyo: Daido Hysteric, no. 4* (Tokyo: Hysteric Glamour, 1993); *Tokyo: Daido Hysteric, no. 6* (Tokyo: Hysteric Glamour, 1994); *Osaka: Daido Hysteric, no. 8* (Tokyo: Hysteric Glamour, 1997).

Considered one of the greatest masters of contemporary Japanese photography, Daido Moriyama is a photographer on the road, a lone traveller whose black & white images recount visions and worlds hidden just beneath the surface of reality. This volume, *The World through My Eyes*, contains 250 photographs from the 1960s to our days. A constant flow of images that is often frenetic or suddenly suspended, following the rhythm of an unfettered, restless life spent travelling the roads of the world.

ISBN 978-88-572-0061-3
9 788857 200613
$ 55.00 Canada $ 64.00 £ 39.95